The Mountain Lion: A Reconsideration *Blanche Gelfant*

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TRB

from Washington
May 10, 1975

Out from Under

Do you hear the pitter-patter of rebate checks falling gently across the parched land? It's like a steady rain—one of the most massive cash transfusions in history—voted by Congress to combat recession and now just beginning. The tax rebate checks will amount to $8.1 billion this year. Simultaneously, starting May 1, less tax money is being withheld in weekly wages and salaries—another consumer benefit of $10.5 billion in 1975. Also, $50 increases go to each of the nation's 34 million social security beneficiaries, equalling $1.7 billion in increased purchasing power.

Maybe with Vietnam phasing out we can turn back to another favorite worry, the economic crisis. The gravest economic emergency in the postwar era seems to have just missed turning into a full-scale depression. From that point of view the news is good. Inflation is down; but unemployment is up.

Nobody quite knows what the new stimulus of purchasing power voted by Congress, with grudging approval of the administration, will do. Tax rebates of $100 to $200 are going out this month, plus $50 or so for recipients of social security and other federal income support programs. The money will trickle into shops and stores and savings accounts. The rivulets may start the mill turning again—just in the nick of time. It will also send the federal deficit up prodigiously. No doubt about it, America is taking a risk. But practically every moderate or liberal economist in the country thinks the risk is necessary. They look anxiously at the Federal Reserve System. The quasi-independent board, and particularly its strong-willed septuagenarian chairman Arthur Burns, have theoretical power to neutralize the stimulative effect of rebate checks and reduced withholding on wages and salaries that began May 1. They can continue a tight money policy (*i.e.*, making credit expensive).

Let's look at the overall situation.

The inflationary boom got underway in the mid-'60s when Lyndon Johnson tried to fool the public into believing that Vietnam wouldn't cost much. Chairman Gardner Ackley of the Council of Economic Advisers and the other members implored him to raise taxes to pay for the war and to stop inflation. He delayed, and so did Congress, and the inflationary brushfire gathered speed. Later on, a series of conservative economic advisers of Nixon and Ford temporized. Right down to Mr. Ford's "summit" economic conference last September the administration couldn't see that the rising inflation was finally collapsing into a recession, and the President went through his nonsense of WIN buttons and proposed tax increases. It seems incredible now—as strange as some of the misapprehensions of White House advisers in the Vietnam war!

The Federal Reserve System can turn credit on or off like a faucet and thereby stimulate or contract a business boom; in the early '70s it grossly misjudged the situation, turning credit on and giving President Nixon a fine send-off for his reelection. Then, as inflation roared, it cut back credit savagely in 1974 even when outside economists warned that the boom was running down anyway and would almost certainly end in a bust. A writer in *The Wall Street Journal* last week referred to "the Federal Reserve's heavy-handed tight-money policy of 1974 that sought to stop the frightening price spiral at all costs." Economists Paul A. Samuelson of MIT and James Tobin of Yale put it simply: this is a "Burns recession."

Burns, of course, has a point: you don't fool around with a double-digit inflation—the worst in modern times. But the weight of economic opinion is that he handled the matter too drastically, almost violently; there is a staff revolt within the Fed, and Congess is so upset that it has instituted supervisory machinery to bring him regularly before it for explanations for the first time in history, and it may curtail his power.

Meanwhile, how stands the economy? Much of the news is encouraging. America has apparently ducked a 1929-type depression that many thought was inevitable. The conventional wisdom is that the economy will be on its way up by the end of the year. Inflation is steadily dropping. The stock market has advanced 40 percent. It is true that business is operating at only about 70 percent capacity but, in the long run, the industrial giants may take comfort. A lot of little companies have gone under (the 100 largest companies already control 50 percent of all industrial assets). Once more business has purged itself of "wastes" by a seemingly inevitable periodic recession and put labor in its place. (There won't be much nonsense about wage hikes with nine percent unemployment!)

Here are some of the costs. The rule of thumb is that for each additional point of unemployment US output drops $50 billion (GNP). If five percent unemployment is "normal," then the present nine percent equals $200 billion in lost product—schools, homes, health care, whatnot. There is a corresponding $14 billion loss per point in federal tax revenues, plus two billion dollars for increased federal unemployment insurance. No wonder the federal deficit is big: it is compounded of lost tax revenues and higher unemployment costs. The quickest route to a balanced budget is through restored employment. Six million Americans last week drew unemployment insurance. The New Deal put that pillow under the economy. If it weren't there we would have panic and riots.

Even so, it is the laborer, the hard-hat, the working man, who has suffered most from recession; he is carrying the principal burden for righting the economy. Monthly statistics from President Ford's Council of Economic Advisers show that the average weekly earnings of an industrial worker in February (1967 dollars) was $114.38. In 1966 his earnings were $115.58. He is, in effect, earning less than nine years ago.

The middle class has its special bitterness, too. For example the company that employs Tom Smith gave him an eight percent raise to ease the inflation bite, which put him into a higher tax bracket! His purchasing power went down as his tax went up. An eight percent increase in personal income for the nation last year produced a 15 percent tax increase from individuals. It's the first recession in history where this happened. Tax payments last year rose faster than any other item in the family budget.

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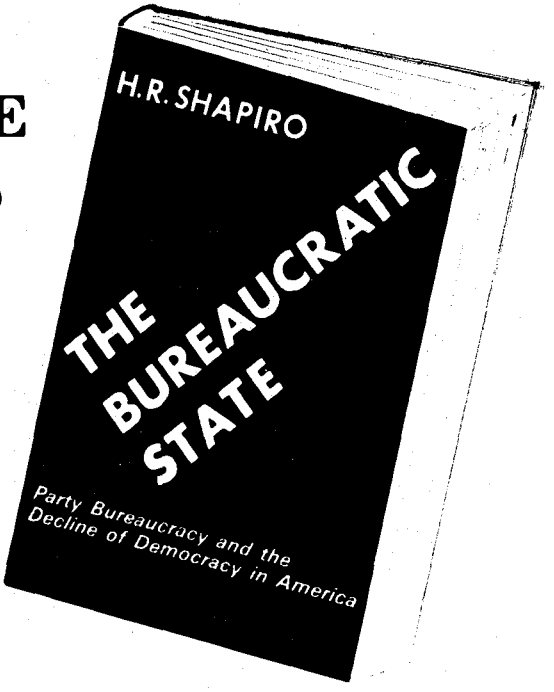
by H.R. Shapiro



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Congress and Intelligence

The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) wants congressional approval to build an $86 million headquarters on the site of a former air force base in Washington, DC. We suspect most people familiar with the CIA and FBI would be hard put to say what the DIA does or has done that would justify setting it up in the nation's capital's fifth most expensive government building.

Since 1961, when it was created to manage the various intelligence collection and distribution operations of the individual military services, DIA has been busy trying to win back, from the civilians at CIA, control over military intelligence estimates. That control is important to the Pentagon because intelligence estimates are the foundation upon which the army, navy, air force and marines build their future weapons and force structures. The inroads DIA has made in this effort—not just the so-called "substandard facilities" it claims to have—may be behind the Pentagon's decision in this tight budget year to solicit $86 million to house DIA's 3000 Washington-area employees.

The fight between DIA and CIA over military intelligence information has been financially wasteful and politically damaging. A former CIA analyst, Samuel Adams, recently wrote how his military opposite numbers deliberately misrepresented North Vietnam and Vietcong force level estimates to justify Pentagon policies. During the 1969 congressional debate on the Safeguard anti-ballistic missile system, CIA and DIA produced contradictory data on Soviet offensive and defensive missile systems. The CIA material was used to oppose the Safeguard; DIA intelligence to support it.

The DIA's daily intelligence digest circulates in the Pentagon and competes for readership in the rest of the national security establishment with the CIA's daily digest. In addition the DIA puts out reams of regular studies on "existing or impending foreign military trends, activities, or threats" and on a myriad of other subjects including "counterintelligence." Within the Pentagon a sharp distinction is made between DIA, acting as a manager and processor of intelligence information, and the intelligence branches of the individual services, which do the actual collection.

It was once held that the establishment of DIA would inevitably lead to a unification of the various services' intelligence and security

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operations. That has not happened. In 1971, after the embarrassing revelations of army domestic spying were disclosed to Sen. Sam Ervin's constitutional rights subcommittee, the Pentagon did set up a Defense Investigative Service combining in one organization the personnel security investigations for all Defense Department agencies. But behind this unit each service still maintained its own individual counterintelligence and criminal investigative operations. The army's Counterintelligence Corps, which did the civilian information collection that so aroused the nation, still exists.

Each service also has its own overt and covert intelligence collectors. And on top of that, they each operate electronic listening organizations called "security services." These units use sophisticated devices to overhear or automatically record radio transmissions. Though each service maintains its own capability for communications intelligence, there is a managing organization, the National Security Agency (NSA), to coordinate the entire operation. NSA, like DIA, sets out the tasks that the individual services are to undertake to meet Pentagon needs. But the services are also free to undertake some intelligence collecting on their own. For example the army's Security Service in 1963 overheard and recorded walkie-talkie radio transmissions during Martin Luther King's march on Washington. They used them again in 1968 in Chicago during the Democratic convention. In 1969 and 1970 the military services, listening overseas, picked up radio telegrams sent by American radicals and anti-Vietnam war leaders traveling abroad.

Neither NSA nor DIA has ever been subject to extensive congressional inquiry. Neither was established by statute so neither has been barred by law in any way from undertaking, for example, domestic police type activities. Their joint budgets run over four billion dollars. CIA's is about $750 million.

The Rockefeller commission examining the CIA's domestic activities is due to make its report in June. Thanks in part to a tip President Ford gave *New York Times* editors, John Kennedy's assassination has become the subject of the commission's inquiry and public concern. That concern is also reflected in a decision by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that it, too, will look into assassinations in addition to CIA activities in Laos, Chile and the US, and FBI wiretapping and counterintelligence.

The House Select Intelligence Committee has had trouble getting underway. With a vague charter and a broad-spectrum political make-up, the committee has had a problem selecting a staff director. Perhaps it would be wise for both the Senate and House intelligence committees now to stand aside on the explosive Kennedy assassination issue and give it to a separate joint committee. Then they could devote more time to probing DIA and NSA, which represent problems that will be with us in the future.

Keeping Options Open

President Ford's recent comments on a possible future oil embargo have a disquieting ring. They have been clumsily formulated, and seem offhanded. Maybe they shouldn't be taken as policy. Yet a careful reading of them does convey the President's frame of mind and intent. The message is: faced with a cutoff of shipments from our principal oil suppliers, the United States will do nothing.

The President's remarks on a possible embargo came near the very end of his state of the world message on April 10 in a catchall section entitled "New Challenges." He spoke a couple of paragraphs on the subject, and ended with a sentence that, in a way, sounded firm. "Our economy," he said, "cannot be left to the mercy of decisions over which we have no control." It is clear he did not mean we would seek to establish such control, over decisions made by unfriendly oil suppliers. All he was saying, uncontroversially, was that the US had better be ready to neutralize the impact of an embargo by practicing conservation and finding new sources of domestic energy.

Yet, the thrust of his comments was that we are receding from rather than approaching this objective. "Every month that passes," Ford said, "brings us closer to the day when we will be dependent on imported energy for 50 percent of our requirements." He then proceeded to make the crucial observation: "A new embargo under these conditions would have a devastating impact on jobs, industrial expansion and inflation at home." One concludes from reading those sentences that the President is prepared to accept the "devastating impact" that an oil embargo will have on American society.

It would perhaps be presumptuous to argue that Sheik Ahmed Zaki Yamani, Saudi Arabia's minister of petroleum, read the speech and took it as an invitation to press the threat of the "oil weapon" a step beyond where it has been before. In the past, the Arab oil producers have said they would make use of an embargo as a strategic arm in a war with Israel. But in a speech before the American Society of Newspaper Editors the week after the President's message, Sheik Yamani suggested very strongly that an embargo might be used as a political weapon in circumstances well short of war. It is true that he said, "The oil weapon is shelved for now," which is the statement *The Washington Post* seized upon for a misleading headline. More important was the follow-up, when he said that "oil as a political weapon will be defused by reaching a peaceful solution based on United Nations Resolution 242." That sounds very much as if the oil suppliers are ready to apply, or threaten to apply, an embargo to dictate the terms of peace.

The same *Washington Post* article also said: "Earlier, Saudi officials put out the word that there were

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circumstances short of all-out war in which the oil weapon could be brought into play, for example if Israel refused to give up the Golan Heights or the West Bank. This, the officials said, could amount to a situation 'identical to war.'" Given the games that diplomats and journalists play with each other, it is reasonable to assume that the assertion came from the same Sheik Yamani, who was willing to send a more explicit message on a not-for-attribution basis than he was on the record.

One might have thought that President Ford would have learned something from reading Yamani. But in a live television interview with Walter Cronkite and two other CBS journalists three days after Yamani spoke to the ASNE meeting, Ford reaffirmed, again in murky language, the passive response he intended to an oil embargo. Cronkite asked whether the administration, in the course of its much publicized reassessment of Middle Eastern commitments, had decided on a change of policy toward Israel. Ford answered: "I think we have to, in this very difficult situation, where the possibility of war is certainly a serious one, if you have a war you are *inevitably* going to have an oil embargo—I think we have to be very cautious in our process of reassessment" (emphasis added). Insofar as one can decipher it, that sentence is a public admission that the prospect of an oil embargo is a major determinant in the Middle East reassessment. It is also, consequently, an invitation to the Arabs to apply the threat of embargo more and more aggressively.

In lamenting Ford's supine posture before the menace of the oil producers, one need not infer that the only alternate posture available to the President requires a hand on the saber. In fact one can envisage circumstances when the wisest course in the event of an oil embargo, is to grit our teeth, dip into our reserves and see it through to the end. But as the President himself says, an embargo could have a "devastating impact" on the country, and the government might want to consider a more active reply. Foolish as it is to invite the Arabs to pressure us with the embargo threat, it would be a far worse blunder if they were misled into thinking our national policy is not to respond under any circumstances, and then to fool them by behaving otherwise.

Ford seems not to understand that governments—particularly in highly fluid and tense situations—must keep a variety of options available. The rule is "keep 'em guessing," and Ford has flagrantly violated it. A great power need not choose between being bellicose and obsequious, but need only make clear that it retains the right to act to preserve its vital interests. We ask and receive no more from other great powers. Ford can rectify his bumbling by a simple statement that makes clear that, in the case of an oil embargo, we will do what we must. Otherwise our Arab suppliers might conclude, rightly or not, that their "oil weapon" has almost limitless powers.

Social Experiment In Tanzania

Dar es Salaam

Drought is not a condition conducive to the success of a major experiment in rural socialism. Neither is the impoverishment inflicted by an oil cartel. But imprudently or not, President Julius Nyerere's Tanzania is going ahead with its *ujamaa* program of village collectivization, which may be the most thoroughgoing effort at social revolution since Mao in China.

In moving to establish rural collectives, Tanzania is setting out in what is, for black Africa, a new direction. Though the continent's post-colonial governments have indulged themselves with occasional Marxist slogans, they have been too fearful of tribal loyalties to attempt much social experimentation, and have contented themselves with seeking economic growth within the existing social order. In a word capitalism. Tanzania's neighbors Zambia and Kenya, for example, have perpetuated the free enterprise system left to them by the English, and have grown both increasingly prosperous and corrupt under it. If this is development, Tanzania has been left well behind.

Indeed without Kenya's fertile plains or Zambia's generous mines (but with less intense tribal loyalties), Tanzania is fated to have a more difficult time in economic development (though an easier time in social reorganization) than either of them. President Nyerere says, however, that development is a meaningless concept as measured in growth statistics and the living standards of an urban middle class, while having no impact on the life of ordinary people. Personally austere himself, Nyerere rigorously opposes inequity—while not demanding equality—in the distribution of Tanzania's wealth. Meanwhile until there is some wealth to speak of, he is more deeply committed than any other African to everyone's bearing a share of the poverty.

In pursuit of this end, Nyerere has for a decade or so searched for a kind of socialism that is appropriate to Tanzania. At its simplest, the problem proceeds from the peculiar preference of the Tanzanian peasant to lead an anti-social life. Some explain this preference as the response to the massive slave round-ups of an earlier age; others as an adaptation to slash-and-burn agriculture. Whatever the explanation, Tanzanian peasants have traditionally lived in clusters of one or two families scattered over the countryside. At best theirs was a subsistence economy. Nyerere reasoned that only by concentrating these peasants in villages could the benefits of schools, clean water, medicine and other amenities of modern life be extended to them. Such concentration might also enable them to raise cash crops, to feed an industrial population and, hopefully, to increase overall prosperity. Finally in villages the peasantry might be trained in the sort of

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political awareness that Nyerere considered essential to the creation of a socialist society.

In his quest for a form, Nyerere summoned the Israelis for instruction on how the *kibbutz* worked, and they actually established and settled several models. Since then he has absorbed the lessons the Hungarians offered on Soviet-style collective farming and the Danes on Scandinavian-style agricultural cooperatives. None of these forms proved suitable to Tanzania's needs, however, largely because they were based on a premise of intense capitalization. Obviously Tanzania neither had, nor could its peasants make proper use of, such capitalization.

Nyerere was aggrieved, furthermore, to learn from the Israeli experiments that the villagers who were provided with government accommodations often concluded that the government should also provide them with their livelihood. To discourage the dole mentality, he has since expounded the doctrine that the peasantry had best count on no more than a minimum of direct government assistance. What Nyerere has promoted in place of foreign theories in recent years is a notion of indigenous collectivism, improvised out of the everyday Tanzanian form of cooperation in a near-famine economic order. If this ideology can be summed up, it might be called socialism through self-help.

Late in the 1960s Nyerere started a campaign to persuade Tanzania's peasants to organize themselves into self-help collective villages, called *ujamaas*. At first he did not press very hard. Part of the reason was surely his dislike of coercion. Another part was the government's inability to come through on its half of the bargain. Even though Nyerere promised no luxuries, he did convey the expectation of teachers for village-built classrooms, new seed for village-tilled field, even pumps and piping for village-dug water systems. Yet few as were the peasants who willingly gave up their homesteads, the government could not keep up. The *ujamaa* program languished.

Then last year drought ravaged the countryside for the second consecutive growing season, and oil prices wiped out whatever surpluses might otherwise have been devoted to a development budget. Had Nyerere been looking for an excuse, he was furnished with a good one for abandoning the entire *ujamaa* campaign. Instead he responded just the other way, taking the position that to wait until times grew better could mean waiting forever. The new rule on *ujamaa*zation, radiating outward from the capital to the entire provincial bureaucracy, was full speed ahead.

This time the process wasn't so gentle. The provincial authorities, with quotas to fill, were in theory to convince the peasants of the advantages of village life. In practice the peasants were sternly ordered out of the homes and off the land that was familiar to them. On occasion they were subject to brute force. This was no liquidation of the kulaks, but some were injured and mud huts were battered to the ground. The sites to which the peasants were directed were barren, often chosen at random or for proximity to a road, rather than for arability. With fields to prepare for cultivation and homes that had to be built, the displaced peasants barely had time to keep life together, to say nothing of creating amenities, raising crops for market or developing a socialist sensitivity.

Gradually the stories of cruelty and hardship in the countryside filtered back to the capital and into the African press. So great is Nyerere's prestige, however, that he was personally absolved of responsibility. In fact the mythology holds that he was shocked to learn of the abuses, and ordered the *ujamaa*zation slowed to a more human pace. Indeed there are indications that in the past two or three months there have been no disruptions comparable to last summer's and fall's. But that may be because, practically speaking, the job was already done. An estimated four million Tanzanians (some say as many as six) were relocated in new villages, out of a total population of 14 million. During the past year the percentage of the population living in villages has, according to the best available calculations, risen from less than 20 to almost 80. Though a few peasants have obviously escaped the program, it seems fair to say that, demographically at least, the *ujamaa*zation of Tanzania has been accomplished.

Whether or not it has been accomplished ideologically is another matter. Nyerere's basic socialist conception was to build the *ujamaa* around the cultivation of a single communal plot. Some of the villages are, indeed, organized that way. One torrid afternoon last month I visited a *ujamaa* about 100 miles from Dar es Salaam in which the villagers proudly insisted that I inspect every square inch of their collective acreage, which seemed to me to run from horizon to horizon. But, with increasing frequency, the authorities seem to be willing to compromise on the principle of collectivization, and acquiesce in the organization of villages on the basis of private land holdings, or a mixture of communal and private holdings.

While promoting socialism, Nyerere is also devoted to the sometimes conflicting theory of allowing villagers to make their own political decisions. How he will resolve this dilemma is not yet clear, but a factor in his thinking will surely be productivity. An expanding

COMING: a report on how the collapse of talks has affected Israel's resolve and Rabin's political stock

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body of evidence indicates that Tanzanian farmers—like, it seems, farmers elsewhere in the world—will dedicate themselves more rigorously to the cultivation of their own than to communal plots. For its part the government has been providing seed and fertilizer for communal use, with the open intention of encouraging *ujamaa*zation. Increasingly the farmers are beating the system, it is said, by conniving to divide up the government's largesse and divert it to their own plots.

Indeed observers agree that Tanzanian farmers, if it ever came to a vote, would choose overwhelmingly to own their own plots, rather than till common land. It will not come to a vote, but Nyerere has shown that he is not an inflexible ideologue. He may recognize that the traditional Tanzanian willingness to share with others in a subsistence society is not necessarily transferable to a marketplace society. What seems to be shaping up, in fact, is *ujamaa*zation, but without the built-in socialist component that Nyerere once thought essential to it.

How all this will affect Tanzania's long-term economic development is unclear. The drought, and not the *ujamaa*s, crippled Tanzania's food production last year, and required the importation of huge quantities of grain. The currency reserves that remain after this emergency were largely consumed by the inflated price of oil, leaving the government virtually nothing with which to buy, say, trucks to improve marketing, drills to dig for water, medicines to save babies. But whatever the troubles of the past year, the *ujamaa* program has put more acreage under cultivation than ever before in Tanzania's history, and the fields are being tilled with an eye to greater efficiency. The first harvest since the revolution will come in a few weeks, and it should answer some questions. Meanwhile the indications are that Nyerere, unhappy at the *ujamaa*'s failure to create a loftier Tanzanian, is taking some satisfaction that it may at least be creating a better fed one.

Milton Viorst

White House Watch

In the Beginning

This is a story from another time and another presidency. It is about the beginning of serious US interest and involvement in the Indochina that the Ford administration is sadly abandoning. The record that the story summarizes may be usefully resurrected and reviewed by officials and presumed experts at the Ford White House and the Kissinger State Department. Like most other Americans, many of them have forgotten it or were never familiar with the evidence in it that the US involvement, however botched it was in execution and however tragic it was in the final consequence, was not at the beginning the work and caprice of fools or maniacs. The involvement arose from concepts of the American role in the Pacific and the world that were imbedded in the accepted wisdom of the time and in essence were not very different from the concepts that Gerald Ford and Henry Kissinger urge upon us today.

The time was the late 1930s and early 1940s. The presidency was Franklin D. Roosevelt's. The first American presence in Vietnam dates back a century before then, to 1833, in the persons of a special envoy named Edmund Roberts and the navy sailormen who reluctantly transported him there at the order of President Andrew Jackson. Roberts failed to establish a trading relationship with the Vietnamese, as many Americans after him were to fail in less benign endeavors. Serious and substantial American concern with Indochina as a place in Asia that could affect the interests and security of the United States began during the prelude to American entry into World War II. It was initially linked to the concern with China that Harold Isaacs discussed in this journal's previous issue. It soon exceeded the concern with China, however, and became a concern with Indochina itself and particularly with the part of Indochina that we know as South Vietnam.

The concern had nothing to do with the people, governments and welfare of Indochina. Although composed of five entities subject to varying degrees of French control, the whole of Indochina was regarded as a French possession. It had been so since 1893, when the Kingdom of Laos joined Cambodia and three parts of what the enlightened minority of natives called Vietnam—the original French colony of Cochin-China in the south, and the protectorates of Annam at the center and Tonkin in the north—in subservience to France. The colonial advance of France through these lands and of Britain through upper Burma to the borders of China disturbed the US only insofar as it touched the contest between European powers, and between them and the United States, for economic and political advantage in China. European possession elsewhere in Asia was a welcomed fact. In the 1930s and early 1940s, the imperial system came to be sanctified in the declared American policy of "respect for the *status quo*, except as changes may be and are brought about through orderly process with due regard for the rights and interests of all concerned." It was a worldwide policy, a formula of opposition to change everywhere through the use of military force. But it identified the interests of the United States in the Far East with the imperial *status quo* and particularly, as the State Department was soon saying, with "the maintenance of the *status quo* in Indochina."

Japan's invasions of Chinese Manchuria in 1931 and of China proper in 1937 had a minimal impact upon the

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United States. President Herbert Hoover's refusal to entertain the slightest thought of going to war for Manchuria reduced Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson to diplomatic pulings. So long as Japan confined its second round of aggression to China, President Roosevelt and Secretary of State Cordell Hull confined the American reaction to similar protests, with similar noneffect. It was only when Japan, at first with threats and then with action, reached beyond China to Indochina, that the United States began to perceive in the Japanese aggression a possible and, at the end, a sure cause of war.

The protectorate of Tonkin, approximating today's North Vietnam, bordered upon the Chinese provinces of Yunnan and Kwangsi and, through the port of Haiphong, provided the most useful route of supply from the outer world that remained open to China after Japan sealed off its ports of Shanghai and Canton. Annam and Cochin-China, "southern Indochina" in the parlance of 1938-41 and later South Vietnam, were of a different and greater order of importance to the United States. They were considered to command the way to the American Philippines, to British Malaya and Singapore, and to the Dutch East Indies, not to mention Thailand, Hongkong, Burma and even India if Japan's expansionist ambition stretched that far. Although these apprehensions were very real, they elided the fact that the perceived peril arose more from the identity and purpose of the occupier than from geography. Southern Indochina, left to France, troubled only the inhabitants who wished to be free of France. Japan in the event made little use of the south as a staging area for the forces that attacked the Philippines, Malaya and Singapore, and the East Indies. But Japan undertook the attacks and struck Pearl Harbor only after it occupied southern Indochina. The act of occupation proved to be what Roosevelt and Hull took it to be, a signal that Japan's ambition confronted the United States with the choice of war or of consent without war.

In and after 1938 the drumming references to Indochina in messages to the State Department from the Far East and from Europe became ever more frequent and ever more insistent. When the French ambassador in Washington, Count Saint-Quentin, pleaded in the late 1930s that open and formal collaboration against Japan was "imperative because of the vulnerability of French Indochina to Japanese attack," Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles replied as American spokesmen replied to such entreaties throughout the decade from the Japanese invasion of Manchuria to the day of Pearl Harbor. Welles said that the US government "was taking and would take an independent course, depending upon the fundamental interests of the United States." Until the summer of 1941, the "independent course" in the Far East consisted largely of deploring events and urging France to make it as difficult as possible for Japan to overrun Indochina. In this France did extraordinarily well, before and after it surrendered to Hitler Germany and Marshal Philippe Petain established his truncated government at Vichy.

American officials in Washington could never quite follow and never quite believe the bewildering story in diplomatic dispatches of obstruction, deception and procrastination that France practiced against the Japanese. Aware that they were being lied to and hoodwinked, the Japanese were not much more exasperated than the baffled Americans in Washington were. In September of 1939 the State Department instructed Ambassador William C. Bullitt in Paris to get from the French government an explicit statement of just what military and other supplies could be transshipped to China. Bullitt advised the department not to be silly; US shipments through Indochina would not be detained "provided they are labelled on the principle that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet." He added that he would spell out the obvious if the department was so dense as to require it. "The situation is clear," the chastened department replied. "No further explanation is necessary."

A Japanese army spokesman, advising the British embassy in Tokyo to pay no attention to US attempts to negotiate the mounting differences with Japan, said in June of 1940 that "there is nothing now to stop Japan from seizing French Indochina, the Netherlands East Indies, or Hongkong or all of them." It was true: Secretary Hull could do no more than beg the British and French to "devise parleys and protract the situation" while the United States muddled through its slow awakening to perils that its people, Congress and press did not want to recognize. France had just surrendered in Europe, Britain stood alone in defense of its home island, and Japan saw that its time to move had come.

It moved first against Indochina, in two stages. On August 4, 1940 it demanded of the new Petain government in Vichy recognition of Japan's "special interest" and "privileged position" in Indochina, with the right to occupy the port of Haiphong, suppress the supply of China through the port and Tonkin, and generally establish a Japanese military presence in Tonkin. On July 12, 1941 Japan demanded Vichy's assent to the military occupation of southern Indochina. In both instances the feeble Vichy government and the isolated, thinly armed colonial administration at Hanoi resisted the initial demands, "protracted the situation" with skill and stubbornness, considerably reduced the formal concessions, and finally capitulated. Although it occurred in two phases it was a continuous process of pressure and retreat in which the United States played a part.

The American role amounted to a deliberate, cruel and in the circumstances justified play upon the profound sense of humiliation from which the defeated French already suffered. Washington told Vichy again

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and again that concession to the Japanese would abet the debasement of France and further diminish its low standing with the US and the world. The harried Vichy officials taunted the Americans with the contrast between their preachments and their government's refusal to enforce its principles with armed action or even with joint diplomatic action. Secretary Hull, professing alarm at reports of substantial French concessions to the Japanese, ordered the small American mission in Vichy to say that the concessions "would create an unfavorable impression in this country." H. Freeman Matthews, the career officer in charge of the mission (Admiral William D. Leahy had not yet been appointed ambassador) replied in evident sympathy with his French friends that they were trying to "obtain the best possible bargain." The State Department continued to complain about "the measure of assent" to Japanese demands and ordered Matthews to emphasize that "our interest is the maintenance of the *status quo* in Indochina." A bargain in principle, less onerous than might have been expected, was struck on August 30. But the messy business dragged on until September 23, when the Japanese attacked a border fort at Langson in Tonkin and 800 French and native soldiers died in its defense. After an agreement was signed, leaving French sovereignty and the colonial administration nominally intact, the Japanese insisted upon coming as conquerors. They bombed Haiphong, occupied airfields by force, and rapidly made Tonkin their military fief.

At this stage the US made no use of the only two sanctions open to it, short of military action. They were restriction of US trade with Japan and suspension of the Japanese-American discussions that proceeded in Tokyo and Washington. Whether successive Japanese governments seriously hoped to compose the differences or continued the diplomatic discussions only as a cover for war preparations, the Japanese seemed to value the negotiations and to fear their suspension. Anxious to deter Japan, the US government was deterred by its own fear that substantial sanctions would incite expanded Japanese aggression.

It was in this agonizing context of countervailing interests, fears and weaknesses that the American government deplored without materially resisting or penalizing the Japanese move into northern Indochina. The record indicates that the Japanese presence there would have been tolerated indefinitely, as the Communist presence would be tolerated afterward, if the presence had been confined to Tonkin. This was not to be. Signs that the Japanese were looking southward appeared before 1940 was out. Between December of 1940 and July of 1941, Japanese spokesmen in Tokyo, Europe and Washington spread the word, often in cloudy ambiguities, that Britain was plotting with Gaullist Frenchmen in Indochina and possibly with the Dutch to mount an assault upon Japan from southern Indochina. The implication was that any Japanese advance from northern to southern Indochina would be in self-defense and also in a righteous endeavor to prevent the spread of the European war to the Far East. The Americans at whom this fantasy was aimed did not believe it as such. But they took it to be a portent of things to come.

The foreseen events occurred with paralyzing speed in July: on the 12th, in temporary secrecy, a Japanese ultimatum demanding military access to southern Indochina; on the 21st, preliminary agreement; and on the 29th formal cession to Japan of eight airfields, naval facilities at Camranh and Saigon, and the right to introduce unlimited numbers of troops. Again Washington ordered its Vichy mission, now headed by Admiral Leahy, to press for delay and emphasize the shame of surrender. Again Vichy bargained down the initial concessions and retained sovereignty. Again the French relieved their humiliation with galling references to American inaction. Leahy reported that when he told Petain that Japan would now be in a position to attack the American Philippines from southern Indochina, "he admitted that but said that France is helpless and that he himself 'is not a free agent.'" Quelling any qualms that it may have felt about the American posture, the department told Leahy in October that it was "not impressed with the vigor of French resistance."

Washington was hardly entitled to sneer at the French. The US government was in no shape politically or militarily to do much if anything more than it did in the months of peace remaining to it between the events of July and the sweeping away of all doubts and hesitancy at Pearl Harbor. Only the fact of war reconciled the American people to war. But the Japanese move into southern Indochina forced US officialdom to face the prospect of war as nothing previously had done. In the words of a State Department memorandum written six months after Pearl Harbor, the seizure of southern Indochina "constituted an overt act menacing the security of the United States . . . It created a situation in which the risk of war became so great that the United States and other countries concerned were confronted no longer with the question of avoiding such risk but from then on with the problem of preventing a complete undermining of their security."

The seizure of the south recurred again and again in the last US-Japanese exchanges as the intolerable act and symbol of Japanese aggression. President Roosevelt refused to meet the Japanese premier, Prince Konoye, in a final search for peace at the summit because Japan would not attest its good intentions by withdrawing from southern Indochina. The last American act in the prelude to war, Roosevelt's famous and futile message of December 6, 1941, to Emperor Hirohito, dealt almost entirely with the Japanese presence in the south. The message concluded with the

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statement that "a withdrawal of the Japanese forces from Indochina would result in the assurance of peace throughout the whole of the South Pacific area."

Pearl Harbor had been attacked and Japanese forces were attacking or approaching the Philippines, Thailand, Malaya and Singapore, Hongkong and the East Indies when the message reached Tokyo. It was never answered.

John Osborne

Missile-Age Stonehenge

by Walter Pincus

Kwajalein Island

Kwajalein Atoll is made up of 89 tiny islands connected by coral reefs enclosing a 70-mile long, boomerang-shaped lagoon. The area of the lagoon, the largest in the Pacific, measures approximately 900 square miles; the land area of the islands that surround it totals a mere 5.6 square miles.

As your plane comes in to land, the radar towers, giant domes, tracking dish antennae and other structures dotting the chain of tiny islands rise up like a missile-age Stonehenge in the mid-Pacific. On Kwajalein Island, the largest in the chain, a four-story, cement-block building sits at the end of the airport runway with black phased-array radar eyes on two sides staring out to sea. Fifteen years ago this multimillion-dollar structure was the heart of Nike-Zeus, the experimental anti-ballistic missile (ABM) system that preceeded Safeguard. Today it stands unused. Speeding down the runway you pass a giant, circular, chain-link cage 40 feet high and more than 300 yards in diameter. Once it was a long-range radar component of Nike-Zeus; today it serves as the enclosure for a golf driving range.

Although monster monuments to past ABM systems are easily visible, current operations are more difficult to observe. Since 1959 Kwajalein has been the center of US ABM testing; in the 1960s it also became a testing range for US offensive ICBMs and multiple warhead systems. Security here is tight. Although commercial planes may land, only persons cleared by the army's Missile Defense Command in Huntsville, Alabama may stay. Even the Marshall Islanders who do service and maintenance work must carry a visitor's pass and live on Ebeye, another island eight miles away.

From Vandenberg Air Force Base in California, 4200 miles to the east across the Pacific, the air force fires its ICBMs into specified areas of Kwajalein's lagoon. Two hours before each launch telephone lines to Vandenberg open up. The long-range radars begin tracking almost from blast-off. At Roi-Namur on the northern end of the atoll, MIT's Lincoln Laboratory operates something called Project Press, a Defense Department research program aimed at finding ways to identify ICBM reentry vehicles, decoys, spent missile fuel tanks and other post-launch debris. Three large radar units, one with a 150-foot dish antenna, send information to an IBM computer system as the flight takes place.

A central computer controls subordinate computers that operate Kwajalein's radar, telemetry and photo recording facilities. Eight optical tracking units are located on various islands. Each is equipped with still, movie and closed-circuit TV cameras. They follow the reentry until splashdown. At that moment, a splash detection radar mounted on a 110-foot tower detects and records the plume of water to aid in location and recovery of warheads.

A 20-year-old army landing craft has been converted to serve as the pickup boat. Named the "Neptune," it once carried a two-man submarine that searched the lagoon bottom for the spent missile. That sub was retired and a new one has been ordered. In the meantime a diving chamber is used as a substitute. Once the debris has been located, scuba divers pick it up from the lagoon bottom and bring it back for analysis.

The missile testing draws a few unofficial observers. A Soviet trawler equipped with its own recording devices is often nearby. Once a Soviet ship attempted to enter the lagoon but turned about when a speed boat was sent out to intercept it. Kwajalein visitors sometimes witness an event. One ship captain recalls he was in the northern part of the lagoon when several reentry vehicles—probably from a MIRV vehicle—streaked through the night and plunged into the lagoon. Residents and employees refuse to discuss the classified tests.

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Along with the air force, the navy has used the Kwajalein range to test its Polaris and Poseidon missiles and is expected to employ it soon for the new Trident long-range submarine-launched ICBM.

Since 1959, however, the prime mission of Kwajalein has been experimentation and testing of army ABM defense systems. The program has been evolving since the early 1960s. Equipment designed in the Nike-Zeus program successfully intercepted an ICBM fired from Vandenberg in July 1962 within what was termed a "lethal distance."

The Nike-Zeus system was redesignated Nike-X in 1964 and more advanced radar facilities were constructed both on Kwajalein and on Meck Island, 19 miles to the north. In 1967 the ABM system was renamed Sentinel. By that time, a Spartan long-range missile complex had been built on Kwajalein where the Zeus missile had once been fired. In addition the five-story cement block missile site radar (MSR), along with its computer system and a launch complex for Spartan and shorter range Sprint missiles were built on Meck. The effectiveness of the MSR and its computer were the focus of the congressional ABM debates of 1969, when the Nixon administration asked Congress to finance deployment of the renamed but still untested Safeguard system.

According to a Washington report, early Sentinel/Safeguard tests were not uniformly successful. Of the first 10 Spartan tests, four were failures. To date about 50 Safeguard tests reportedly have taken place at Kwajalein. Although no one here will discuss the tests or their results, it is obvious the evolutionary process has continued. For example a remote launch site for both Spartan and Sprint missiles was built on an island 17 miles across the lagoon from Meck Island and the Safeguard control complex. From Meck the remote site missiles were guided to their targets.

The only Safeguard site within the US—in North Dakota—was declared operational in October 1974. Nonetheless tests of the Safeguard system are planned here through the end of this year. The most recent took place April 3. Visitors to Kwajalein say observing a Safeguard intercept mission is a bit like the Fourth of July. First the evening sky is illuminated by the launch of the intercept missiles. As debris comes back to earth the sky is colored again with bright tracings of falling red-hot metal.

"Site defense"—the ABM system that is to follow Safeguard—is now in the research and development phase. Its prime contractors already have established offices here though initial testing is not expected to start for more than a year. By that time the 400 or so technicians and 200 dependents associated with Safeguard will have departed. Whether the multimillion-dollar facilities of Safeguard will join the unused Nike buildings here as dead monuments to the Cold War has yet to be determined.

The end of Safeguard will reduce the US population at Kwajalein Atoll below 3000, a sharp drop from the 5000-plus of five years ago. General cutbacks in the defense budget have raised questions about the future of the Kwajalein missile range. Further complicating matters here are the increasingly complex politics of America's Micronesian Trust Territories. Though the Marshall Islands are perhaps the poorest of the six trust territory districts, the base at Kwajalein is the territory's biggest employer.

he US has occupied Kwajalein since 1944 when it became one of the first of Japan's prewar Pacific territories to be taken by invasion. After the war the US navy used it as a refueling and communications base. In 1951 about 300 Marshallese who up to that time had lived on Kwajalein Island were relocated to a navy-constructed village on nearby Ebeye Island. Over the next five years—during the Korean war and a period of nuclear weapons testing at Bikini and Eniwetok—dependent housing and support facilities were built on Kwajalein for Americans. By the late 1950s, however, use of the island had declined to such an extent that the navy put it on the military base surplus list.

The ABM testing program changed its status again and the atoll took on a new importance for Defense. The character of the work here required a new operational structure. A civilian company was hired to run the base and the navy presence cut substantially. As test programs grew, the newcomers to Kwajalein were increasingly civilian contract personnel, not military men. In 1964 the army took control of the base from the navy. Today only 21 army civilian personnel remain to manage the island's affairs and supervise an American work force of about 2300.

Life for the Americans here is secure. About 300 bachelors live at Roi-Namur. Employees with dependents and other bachelors live on Kwajalein Island—the bachelors in barrack-like structures, the families in cement block homes or trailers. Until recently, bachelors without written invitations were barred from family residential areas. There are elementary and high schools, a shopping complex, and to relieve boredom, five movie theaters that change pictures each night. The island has its own civilian police force and is proud that crime—other than an occasional bicycle theft—is almost nonexistent.

For many of the American technicians, returning to the States after a two-year tour on Kwajalein is a difficult readjustment. Just the opposite is true for the Marshallese. To them, Kwajalein is the big apple. About 500 live on Ebeye and work on the missile range program. Ebeye's Marshallese population has grown to almost 8000—about one-third of the entire Marshall Island population. Drawn from the simple life in the outer islands, the Marshallese move in with any relative who has a job and food. Packed together in slums, the Ebeye Marshallese live in a condition that presents a major health problem. During the current

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dry season a water shortage has developed. Each morning Marshallese employees of the government arrive on Kwajalein with plastic gallon containers, which they fill with water before going home. Each evening the army boat that serves as a bus for the Marshallese is met by a crowd of children, pushing and shoving for the water distributed by the captain.

After many years of virtual neglect, the US in 1970 increased the amount of money appropriated for use in the trust territory to $50 million, then raised it another $10 million in the following five years. The purpose of this was to upgrade the capital infrastructure—schools, sewage, water facilities and hospitals. A recent report by the Senate Interior Committee examined the failures of this program. On Ebeye, work on a $350,000 sewage treatment plant was begun in fiscal 1971. At the time raw sewage was being dumped into the lagoon, which also serves as a source of edible fish. The plant was to be completed by September 1973. On May 30, 1974 the construction contract was terminated with only 13 percent of the work completed.

Since most of the new money is being directed toward large capital projects, little funnels down for local purposes. On March 17, for example, the following notice was posted by the trust territory public works officer on his Ebeye bulletin board:

"Notice to all island residents. Effective immediately Public Works will no longer be able to provide coffens [sic] in the case of a death in any family. This was brought about due to our very limited budget and sarcity [sic] of materials. Public Works will still construct the coffens free of charge if the materials are supplied by the requestor."

For years the US failed to pay rent for the land it used on Kwajalein. Then when the missile program began, it moved Marshall Islanders off other islands located near lagoon target areas. An annual payment of $425,000 is divided among displaced landowners. Over the years hundreds of additional Marshallese have turned up, claiming by tradition some portion of an island—and thus payment. More recently the Congress of Micronesia placed a three percent tax on American employees here (who pay no US taxes if they are here longer than 18 months). The roughly one million dollars thus collected represents the biggest income the Congress has been able to generate for itself.

Trust territory status is bound to end. The neighboring Mariana Islands will vote soon on whether to become an American commonwealth. Marshallese politicians have talked of independence, but without the Americans at Kwajalein, there would be no economic base of support. Some here believe that would be fine, for they would like the Marshall Islands to return to the simple life that existed before the Germans, Japanese and finally the Americans arrived.

Realistically, however, the Marshallese have been hooked. Their diet now includes rice and canned foods that cannot be locally produced. They have acquired a taste for imported cigarettes, liquor and chewing gum.

In Majuro, the Marshall Islands district capital 200 miles from here, cable television has been introduced for a population of about 7000.

If the Marshallese can't go back, neither can the Americans. As long as missiles and anti-missile missiles must be tested, this atoll will offer one of the best and safest test sites. Having invested almost two billion dollars, the US government shows little inclination to leave. That being the case, some way ought to be found to spread the economic benefits of Kwajalein to the outer islands and thus give those Marshallese now crowding Ebeye for jobs, money and food a reason to go back to their home islands.

The Hasty Retreat from Saigon

by Stanley Karnow

On the morning of March 8, 1965, two US marine battalions splashed ashore at Danang, ostensibly to protect the airport and harbor facilities, but, in fact, to spearhead the commitment of American combat troops that would escalate to a half-million men in the years that followed. Last week, a decade later, the marines were back in Vietnam in order to assure the withdrawal of an ultimate handful of Americans and their Vietnamese collaborators, and this time their deployment marked the end of US involvement. Besides their

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differences in duration and intent, the two operations contrastingly demonstrated that entering Vietnam was easier than getting out, for several reasons. In the first place Lyndon Johnson had dealt with a docile Congress that, in backing the Tonkin Gulf resolution without a qualm, virtually gave him a blank check for intervention, while President Ford faced a suspicious legislature that had become sensitive to White House lies, and was, moreover, seeking to assert its own prerogatives. The Johnson administration also had the support of the country, if only to the extent that the American people were then willing to accept almost any foreign policy, while Mr. Ford, in the wake of Watergate, was contending with a public that no longer believed the rhetoric of its leaders. And finally, the original marine landings in Vietnam had been carefully planned in advance as part of a longstanding program to turn the responsibility for fighting over to Americans while the evacuation from Saigon was a hastily contrived move that had to be undertaken not only in the midst of a South Vietnamese military debacle but was organized in an atmosphere of disagreement within the US establishment. So the US presence in Vietnam ended in confusion and humiliation, and, judging from some of the criticism already emerging from Capitol Hill, its aftermath may be, despite the President's pleas for unity, a period of recrimination.

uture historians will certainly examine the events of the past few weeks in greater detail and depth than I have been able to do, yet it appears to me at this stage that the Ford administration could have removed most of the Americans from Saigon earlier and with fewer risks, and probably have brought out many more Vietnamese, had it accepted the reality of the Vietnam disaster sooner. By beginning the pullout earlier the administration might have also signaled indirectly that it favored the ouster of former South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu, and his overthrow, had it occurred sooner, might have minimized the disaster and paved the way for a less decisive Communist takeover. The official explanation for the slowness of the evacuation, as Secretary of State Kissinger outlined it at his news conference the other day, is that larger and faster withdrawals would have triggered panic in Saigon and exposed the Americans there to reprisals from embittered South Vietnamese. That danger surely existed, but, judging from talks with US officials engaged in "Operation Talon Vise," as the Pentagon called the evacuation exercise, I gather that other factors contributed to the initially slow pace of the withdrawal.

The most outspoken advocate of an early and speedy evacuation of Americans was Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger, who throughout the Vietnam crisis had been, in my estimation, the only member of the President's cabinet to look at the situation squarely. But, as best I can determine, he was outmaneuvered by Kissinger and Graham Martin, the US ambassador in Saigon. I gather that Kissinger was in no hurry to get Americans out because he calculated that their departure would demoralize the Thieu regime, which, he contended until rather late in the game, still had the capacity to rally its forces and perhaps defend the Mekong Delta. Kissinger may have hoped as well that the Russians, Chinese and French, through whom he was attempting to channel recommendations to Hanoi, would help him to reach a diplomatic settlement, but one senior official has privately voiced the opinion that this route yielded little from the start. Other US officials suggest that Kissinger also estimated that, by keeping a sizable contingent of Americans in Saigon, the Communists would be deterred from attacking the city out of fear that the US might retaliate by bombing North Vietnam. There is considerably more evidence to substantiate the view, widespread in the upper echelons of the administration, that Martin tried as hard as possible to put the brakes on the withdrawal, partly because he thought that numbers of Americans in Vietnam would serve as a lever that the White House could use to persuade Congress to vote military and economic aid to Thieu, and in part because he sincerely refused to acknowledge that the South Vietnamese government was on the verge of collapse. Administration sources have disclosed that as late as April 9, as Saigon was being encircled by the Communist forces, Martin sent a cable to Washington describing various techniques through which American businessmen could be attracted to invest in a truncated South Vietnam and thereby help in its economic development. According to these sources the irrelevance of the message, arriving as it did at a critical moment, somewhat jarred the President and prompted a few other officials to wonder whether Martin was in possession of all his faculties.

But Martin's performance during the recent flap was essentially the same as his behavior had been since Richard Nixon assigned him to Saigon not long after the Paris agreement was signed in January 1973. Nixon personally selected Martin, and Kissinger approved of the choice, for three motives. They had put a good deal of pressure on Thieu to acquiesce to the Paris agreement and they knew that Martin, who had proved himself to be a hawk during his tenure as envoy to Thailand, would soothe the South Vietnamese leader's bruised ego by sharing his hard line. They probably figured too that a tough, intransigent character like Martin would act as a lightning rod and spare them from congressional and press assaults against their Vietnam policy of propping up the Thieu regime. And they also counted on Martin to bulwark Thieu and guarantee the preservation of his government, whose survival was crucial to Nixon's credibility, at least until the end of his term, since he had claimed to have achieved "peace with honor" in Vietnam. Martin was ideal for the job. He publicly denounced newsmen who

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displayed doubts about Thieu and alleged that congressmen who opposed aid to Saigon were Communist dupes, and, in one instance that came to light, he advised the State Department against giving an "honest and detailed answer" to questions raised by Sen. Edward Kennedy about US conduct in Vietnam. He staffed his Saigon mission with sycophants, and even edited their dispatches in order to cast a halo over Thieu and portray the Communists in dark colors. The administration soon learned to distrust Martin's assessments, yet he served a purpose as far as Kissinger was concerned by appearing to keep the South Vietnamese intact.

he solidity of the Thieu regime was of course an illusion, but Martin honestly believed it to be true, and therefore, even as the Communists were pushing south in late March and early April, he rejected proposals that the post's routine Emergency and Evacuation plan, which is reviewed regularly, be brought up to date. Under the old plan Americans in Saigon would be alerted by a coded signal to be broadcast over a computerized US radio station that had been expressly left in the city in case of a withdrawal. The signal was to have been a report of torrid weather followed by the strains of *White Christmas*, but it was changed after many Americans laughed it off as a joke. Martin instructed his staff not to divulge the code to US journalists whom he regarded as unsympathetic, but that attempt at exclusivity failed. A system under which US wardens would assemble American evacuees at 11 different points in Saigon also went awry when Martin took away their special radios and gave them to the South Vietnamese army, which had run short of communications equipment. The combination of complacency and disarray was such by the end of the first week of April that the Central Intelligence Agency station chief in Saigon, who anticipated that his Vietnamese operatives would be harshly treated by the Communists, ordered his own aircraft and flew several hundred of them to the US. According to one account Martin did not begin to concede to the necessity of taking action until Adm. Noel Gayler, the US commander for the Pacific, flew into Saigon from Honolulu to impress the urgency of the situation upon him.

COMING: Melville J. Ulmer
on the economy
according to
Walt Whitman Rostow

In Washington, meanwhile, President Ford convened an extraordinary meeting with the full membership of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in an effort to obtain authorization to use US troops to protect the evacuation of both Americans and South Vietnamese, and the response he got was mixed. Most of the senators seemed to feel that the deployment of US troops was acceptable for the sake of withdrawing Americans, but they balked at having them cover the pullout of Vietnamese, since, as many argued, the danger of the administration becoming again involved in the fighting was too great. As it turned out, though, the issue was academic. The Senate gave the President his requested authorization, but the House had not begun to vote on the measure on April 29, when the actual evacuation took place. It is doubtful that Mr. Ford really needed legislative assent in order to protect the withdrawal of Americans, since a President evidently has inherent powers under the Constitution to rescue US citizens without prior congressional approval. But the fact that Mr. Ford went through the motions of consulting Congress gained him points on Capitol Hill, where the memory is still fresh of Lyndon Johnson's arbitrary thrust into the Dominican Republic to alter the political situation under the guise of defending Americans. It is worth noting, incidentally, that the issue provoked a fierce and unusually theatrical debate between liberals in the House, with Donald Fraser of Minnesota siding with the President against critics like New York's Elizabeth Holtzman and Donald Riegle of Michigan, and this suggests, in the opinion of one congressman involved in the dispute, that the antiwar movement that was formerly united in its hostility to the Vietnam conflict may split in the future over the question of whether the US has the right to intervene anywhere in the world.

It was not until April 18, spurred in part by the leak of a Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff report revealing that Graham Martin was "actively" resisting the evacuation of Americans from Vietnam, that the White House created a special task force under Dean Brown, an energetic former ambassador who had recently retired. The group established categories of Vietnamese who warranted withdrawal, ranging from wives and other relatives of Americans to employees of the US and so-called "high-risk" cases, such as politicians, intellectuals and others who might be persecuted by the Communists. After repeated nagging to estimate the number of Vietnamese who fell into these categories, Martin came up with the figure of 200,000, which he reached mainly through guesswork. By April 29, the day the last American who opted to leave had quit Saigon, some 55,000 Vietnamese had been brought out aboard US aircraft. The chances are, officials working on the program say, that another 30,000 have escaped by sea and will probably drift into the US. It was a more dramatic migration than the movement of 640,000 Cuban or 40,000 Hungarian

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refugees to the US, since the time element in Vietnam was vital.

There is no doubt, as Kissinger said in his news conference, that the Communists kept raising the ante "with every passing day," first demanding that only Thieu resign, then insisting that all his associates go, and finally calling on Gen. Duong Van Minh, who had taken over, to surrender unconditionally. Kissinger had a pained expression on his face as he related this scenario, as if the Communists had somehow betrayed him. It strikes me, though, that he could not have expected them to behave otherwise unless they had given him explicit pledges, which was almost certainly not the case. The closer they edged toward Saigon the higher were their terms, since the need for them to make concessions obviously diminished as they came within grasp of total victory. Thus, to repeat a thesis that I may have belabored in these pages, the Communists might have accepted an interim compromise had Thieu been bounced earlier, and while that would have only been a camouflaged capitulation, it could possibly have made for a less frantic transition.

The scenes of the final moments in Saigon were heartbreaking, yet American specialists familiar with Vietnamese Communist methods assert that the Vietnamese left behind, including those who worked for the US, do not necessarily face the worst. One of these specialists points out that the Communists classify people along class lines, and, as a consequence, a minor official or policeman formerly on the US payroll may be safer than a wealthy banker or merchant who, in the idiom of Hanoi, would be regarded as a "social negative." Another question, this specialist says, is whether the North Vietnamese are going to apply their own rigid ideological standards to the South, which is highly capitalistic, or whether they will seek to accommodate themselves to the local structure, at least temporarily. One hint that the Communists intend to be conciliatory was contained in a speech delivered in Hue the other day by Nguyen Huu Tho, the head of the Provisional Revolutionary Government. He said that the Vietcong considers South Vietnamese who belonged to the "lackey administration" to have been "the miserable victims of the neocolonialist regime of the US and its henchmen."

The irresistible postscript to this chaotic tragedy is the story of South Vietnam's former Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky, who angrily told a Saigon rally a couple of weeks before the end that Vietnamese who left their homeland were "cowards." It was a stirring statement, but not long afterward Ky, his wife and 13 relatives had all fled Vietnam.

No Funds for Fun City

by Robert J. Samuelson

A lot of strange things have happened to the American economy in the last five years, but there are still some far out possibilities for which the average man is not prepared. The idea of New York City going broke is one of them. And yet that is the specter that constantly seems to stalk the city. In April the state lent the city $400 million. It is an open question whether the city could have borrowed the money anywhere else. If it couldn't the loan averted a genuine crisis in which the city either would have failed to meet its payroll or defaulted on maturing bonds. Either could have been a disaster. A default might have permanently jeopardized the city's ability to borrow, and it needs to borrow to meet its bills. As for a payless pay day, there's no telling how city workers would have reacted.

How did the city arrive at this desperate juncture? In some respects New York's problems typify those of many other large cities. It has a stagnating economic base from which to meet a rising demand for services; between 1969 and 1973, for example, the number of private jobs declined from 3.3 million to less than three million, as light industry and retailing continued to shift to less expensive and more accessible locations. The refashioning of the Great Society programs into revenue sharing particularly penalized cities like New York because the automatic formulas for distributing federal funds neutralized the city's aggressiveness and

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superiority at "grantsmanship." In the last three years federal aid to New York (roughly $2.1 billion) has hardly budged. Finally, the perverse combination of inflation and recession—which reduces local tax revenues, while raising spending (welfare rolls are now expected to rise from 25 percent to 1.25 million)—has forced New York, like many cities, to consider raising taxes while lowering services.

But New York City's problem is not simply everybody else's problem magnified. What makes it different—and more confusing—is the huge debt that the city has managed to accumulate in the past five years. Between mid-1969 and the end of February, the city's total outstanding debt more than doubled from $5.7 billion to $13.7 billion. The city had developed an addiction to credit and depended on its lenders as a junkie depends on his connection.

The analogy is apt. The city is currently suffering because its dealers—the lenders—are no longer willing to lend what the city needs. The withdrawal has been painful and, at times, nearly tragic. City services have been cut back, and there are almost certain to be more cuts. Welfare payments ($258 for a family of four, plus a housing allowance of $100 to $120 a month) have not been raised since 1972, and many city officials now consider them inadequate.

here is no simple way of explaining the precariousness of New York's current situation. A financial crisis—the inability to borrow freely—has compounded a deeper budgetary squeeze in which the city's spending plans outrun available funds considerably. The city's major bankers and Mayor Beame have consistently agreed on one point: that the bankers aren't dictating the measures the city must take "to get its house in order." But if the banks haven't been dictating, their lukewarm support for the city's securities amounts to the same thing. It ensured that the city's financing difficulties would mushroom into a more general political crisis—a crisis that now promises a major confrontation with the city's unions.

The origins of the city's current problems date to the late '60s when Mayor John Lindsay—caught between very costly labor settlements in 1968 and 1969 (average increases of 15 to 20 percent spread over the two years) and the stunted tax intake from the developing recession—resorted increasingly to borrowing as a way of minimizing the budget squeeze. The city began putting more and more current expense items (textbooks, vocational education expenses and the budget for the city planning commission) into the "capital budget," which is heavily financed by issuing new bonds and is usually reserved for long-term improvements, such as roads, sewers and schools. Now, nearly half—$736 million—of the $1.9 billion capital budget goes for current expenses.

By itself, however, this device wasn't adequate. To keep the city's current expense budget in nominal balance, the city also adopted a mindboggling array of fiscal gimmicks, totaling in the hundreds of millions of dollars, which usually increased current revenues (at the expense of future revenues) or reduced current expenses (and raised future expenses). To take but one example: under law the city's pension funds are required to make four percent interest annually, and, to the extent the return falls below four percent, the city must increase its own contributions; however, because general interest rates have risen well above four percent, the city has been deducting the pension fund "excess" (that is the interest above four percent) from its current contributions, despite strong evidence that those contributions fall well short of what's required to pay future benefits.

Even with this doctoring the city couldn't balance its current budget. Mayor Robert Wagner had borrowed more than $200 million to balance the budget in 1965, and in 1971 Lindsay borrowed $308 million. Last year's budget was in deficit, and this year's (ending June 30) is almost certain to be more than $100 million in the red.

It is against this background that the city has now come to grief with its major bankers. Until recently the bankers apparently exerted little direct influence on city affairs. They didn't have to. They are primarily underwriters, not lenders, for the city, and New York's rising debt simply meant more business. As underwriters they buy the city's securities—the bonds and notes the city issues to raise money—and then resell (at a markup) most of what they've bought to other investors. This is usually a profitable passive activity to which the banks don't object. They object, however, when it becomes a losing proposition. And that is precisely what they now fear. Last October 16 a syndicate, headed by the Chase Manhattan Bank and consisting of other banks and investment houses, bought $475.6 million worth of city bonds, which normally would have been sold at slightly higher prices to the public. What happened, however, is that the syndicate couldn't sell all the bonds at the higher prices. Without buyers the syndicate collapsed, and, to unload their bonds, individual members—that is banks and investment houses—had to reduce prices well below what they paid, in some cases as much as 20 percent. No one knows how much the underwriters lost, but the common talk in New York is $25 to $50 million, which does not seem unlikely.

The underwriting failure set the stage for all of the city's subsequent borrowing problems. It frightened the underwriters and made them demand increasingly high interest rates in an attempt to attract new buyers for the city's securities. In a period when interest rates were generally falling, the city's were rising. The strategy may have worked for awhile. (In January, for example, tax-exempt notes were sold to the public at an astronomical rate of nine percent—worth about 15 percent for the investor in a 40 percent tax bracket.) But ultimately it proved self-defeating. It aggravated

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the city's deficit, and may have actually frightened some investors. Or, as one US Treasury official puts it, "Would you lend me $100 at 95 percent interest?"

What happened in October? In retrospect the underwriters say that the city had simply gotten to the point where it wanted to sell more bonds and notes than investors wanted to buy.

This is a plausible explanation. In the last few years the traditional heavy buyers of tax-exempt securities—commercial banks (the same ones that often serve as underwriters) and casualty insurance companies—have been pulling back. Together they purchased almost all $12 billion worth of tax-exempt issues in 1972. Last year they bought only about half of the $15 billion, leaving individuals (a residual classification that includes private trust funds) to pick up about half.

One can only speculate at the reasons for this change. Until recently most big banks were strapped for cash; moreover their need for tax-exempt securities has diminished as a result of new tax shelters, such as leasing companies (when you lease a jumbo jet to an airline, for example, you get the depreciation). The casualty insurance companies, caught in their own squeeze between rising claim costs and regulated premium rates, probably have less to invest. New York City's borrowings had grown so large by last fall that they constituted a huge portion of the entire market for tax-exempts, and many individuals may simply have reached a saturation point.

If simple supply and demand explains what happened last fall, it doesn't account for the more widespread collapse in demand for the city's securities that has occurred since. Borrowing depends on confidence—a fragile, indefinable quality—and confidence in the city is shot. Investors in maturing bonds and notes are cashing them in, and apparently putting their money elsewhere. Given the enormous, adverse publicity about the city's problems, it's impossible to say whether or not the major New York banks could have arrested this loss of confidence, but it's clear they didn't try.

Rather than supporting the market for city securities by becoming larger buyers themselves of notes and bonds, they did just the opposite. From early November to late February, when banks' cash positions were beginning to ease, the major New York City banks reduced their total holdings of all tax-exempt securities from $7.5 billion to $6.8 billion—a decline that almost certainly included New York City securities.

The bankers' attitude has now forced the city into a political crisis that reflects the bankers' apparent judgment that large-scale lending would do nothing more than postpone a crisis of even greater magnitude. Indeed the city now seems to be trapped in a series of nasty vicious circles. If it borrows more it only increases the burden of debt service; between fiscal 1971 and 1975—with the size of the debt and the general level of rates both rising—interest costs for servicing the debt climbed from $781 million to $1.8 billion. If it raises taxes it only risks further accelerating the exodus of business and eroding the tax base. Yet reductions in services are concentrated in places that most people consider essential—police, fire, sanitation—because these areas are most heavily supported by local (not state or federal) funds.

Rising pension costs may make the city's long-term budget outlook even more bleak than the official figures indicate. A recent study by the state found that the city's existing accounting and actuarial procedures—some dating back to the early part of the century—almost certainly understate the city's actual pension obligations. But neither the city nor the unions, the report said, were eager to update the assumptions: the city, because better assumptions might require higher immediate contributions; and the unions, because lower official costs—though unrealistic—made it easier to bargain for still better benefits. Indeed the unions won substantial improvements in the late '60s. Pension payments, $365 million in 1965, grew to $1.1 billion last year. By one plausible calculation, they could approach two billion dollars, including social security, by 1980.

What this all portends is a major confrontation between Mayor Beame and his unions. In his initial estimate for the budget for fiscal 1976 (beginning July 1), Mayor Beame foresaw an expense budget of nearly $13 billion and a deficit of $1.6 billion. He anticipates covering about half of that with higher local taxes and has proposed about 4000 layoffs, which—with attrition and other economies, such as the closing of three hospitals—are expected to reduce the deficit to $640 million. He wants to cover this with more federal and state aid—which he probably won't get.

Beame is scheduled to present the final budget May 15, and there's no predicting how the city will resolve its financial problems. Many of the unions are scheduled to receive a six percent wage increase (plus some cost-of-living adjustment later in the year), and a number of business groups have suggested that the unions forego these raises as a way of cushioning even wider layoffs necessary to reduce the deficit. Figures as high as 20,000 to 40,000 have been mentioned. The banks may be willing to underwrite new issues of city securities, but probably only at high interest rates until they are convinced that the spiraling cycle of borrowing has been broken. The unions are caught between inflation, the magnitude of some past bargaining victories—and members' expectations—and the bleakness of the current situation.

The mayor is wedged in a similar *cul-de-sac*. He must convince investors of the city's long-term soundness (so they will buy bonds and notes) and persuade the unions that the city's financial squeeze is genuine and dire (so they will make meaningful concessions). This means talking out of both sides of his mouth, which, as he has discovered lately, is a very hard thing to do.

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France, America, Japan

Don't Cry with Your Mouth Full (New Yorker). The title comes from an Italian song that accompanies this French picture, and neither the song nor the title has any relevance that I can see. But in a small way this is a daring and quite pleasant picture—daring in a line that includes such a film as the Czech gem *Intimate Lighting*. That is, it dares to have almost no story, relying completely on its people and its texture.

Pascal Thomas, a director new to me, wrote the script with Roland Duval and Suzanne Schiffman, and dared, initially, to take one of the most trite subjects, the sexual awakening of an adolescent girl. By finding the right girl and a perfect supporting cast, by relying on them and the summer countryside of France, by insisting on the dailyness of their lives as well as the romance, he made a good romance. Annie is the buxom, plump, perfectly conventional daughter of a carpenter-farmer, living with her parents, her younger sister and her grandmother. Two days before her boyfriend is drafted, he declines to sleep with her because he's going to be in a bike race the next day. While he's away she suddenly decides to discard her virginity (she certainly isn't seduced) with a small-town rake. The boyfriend comes home on leave, and though he doesn't yet know at the picture's end what she did, there is no hint of future crisis. During the summer, among other items, her kid sister has her first period, her aunt dies and her father builds the coffin, her godfather tries to make her, and Annie herself pouts, quarrels, laughs a lot, helps or doesn't help her mother, and goes with some decency through the fevered muddles of her age.

The picture was shot, by Christian Bachmann, around Thouars, south of the Loire, and the countryside makes you want to go right home and pack. (Thomas cunningly lingers slightly on views after scenes have finished.) Bernard Menez is eccentrically comic as the provincial smoothie, but it is Annie Colé as the fleshy heroine whose validity makes the film possible. All through it you keep asking yourself, "Why am I enjoying this Andy Hardy picture? Travel snobbism? Would I sit still for this if it were set in Indiana?" The answer is yes, I think, if the cast were as good and the intent so truthful. Your faith is rewarded by what turns out, surprisingly, to be the very last moment. I won't describe it, but it confirms that you have been in the hands of a director whose daring is in his simplicity.

A few months ago I was on a panel of judges who were to give an award to an American for lifelong achievement in film. We finally voted the award to a director with a long and significant career, which was fine, but my own first choice was Fredric March. My nomination was voted down because, my colleagues felt, March had had no demonstrable influence (one of the requirements). I voted for the director with pleasure, but I pointed out that, on their ground for disqualifying March, probably no actor would ever get the award.

The fact that March died on April 14 doesn't make the panel's decision any righter or wronger, of course, but it did make me think about the matter of actor's influence. I reread one of the most touching tributes to an actor that I know, Bernard Shaw's memoir of Barry Sullivan, 1821-1891, a famous Shakespearean in his day (in *Shaw on Theatre*, edited by E. J. West, Hill and Wang). Shaw published the piece in 1948, when he was 92, recalling the effect that Sullivan had made on him some 80 years before: "The important truth is that the idols of adolescents, and to some extent of adults, are often founded on their admiration of great actors. It was certainly so in my own case . . . when I was a very impressionable boy he became my model of personal nobility."

Probably March was not a great actor, in serious view, simply because he didn't play enough great roles. But his James Tyrone in O'Neill's masterpiece, on Broadway, showed the greatness that was in him; and the range and truth and power of his film work—*A Star Is Born, Best Years of Our Lives, Nothing Sacred, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, on and on and on, concluding with his magnificent Harry Hope in *The Iceman Cometh*—were like a presence of integrity in a field not especially noted for it. I can't blame March for the state of my "personal nobility," but from the time I first saw him 45 years ago, the quality of his work has been part of my education, therefore an influence.

I wish he had got that award—for my sake, not because he needed it. Anyway, goodbye to him now, from millions.

Of all the major film-producing countries, none has been written about in English as little as Japan. If it weren't for Donald Richie, there would be almost nothing. Now the American critic-teacher Joan Mellen makes a real contribution with *Voices from the Japanese Cinema* (Liveright, $12.50). The book consists of 15 interviews conducted, via translator, in Japan (one exception, in New York) with 12 directors, one distributor-archivist (a woman), one designer (a woman) and an actress. Each interview has a useful introduction by Mellen.

Books of intelligently conducted interviews are among my favorite kinds of film reading, and Mellen's book takes its place in a group that includes Samuels' *Encountering Directors* and (best of breed) the Björkman-Manns-Sima *Bergman on Bergman*. Mellen's questions evoke, naturally, differing answers on Japanese filmmaking today, on the culture and society generally. Every time one begins to suspect that she is bearing down too hard on radical politics or Freud or feminism, the suspicion is allayed by a) the subject's own interest in those subjects and/or b) a return to a context of film esthetics or industrial organiza-

(continued on page 33)

Films Worth Seeing

Amarcord. Fellini's youth, distilled into a bitter, funny, exquisite poem.

Donkey Skin. A fairy tale for grown-ups, somewhat pointless but lovely to watch, including Catherine Deneuve.

Hearts and Minds. Not the definitive Vietnam documentary it ought to have been, especially politically, but with some power.

The Maids. Genet's play in the American Film Theatre series. Excellently acted.

The Passenger. Far below the best Antonioni, still a suspenseful morality of some effect and much visual beauty.

SK

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Women in the Wall
by Julia O'Faolain

(Viking; $7.95)

In the only other work by Julia O'Faolain I have read, a long short story, "Man in the Cellar," an English woman keeps her Italian husband chained up in the cellar for a period while she works out her fantasy of sexual control and captivity, and while she tries to convince him of some of the truths of their relationship: the imbalance between the sexes, the inequities of their marriage. Julia O'Faolain, daughter of Sean, was born in London, now lives there (and in Los Angeles), is clearly a novelist of great talent whose interest has twice come close to a Poe-ian obsession with immurement. This second novel is wild, gaunt, bloody, tragic and wholly impressive. Its appearance on lists of the best of fiction this year is inevitable.

The women in the wall of the title are sixth-century nuns, living out their turbulent, spiritual and corporeal lives in what used to be called the Dark Ages in Gaul. One of them, the anchoress Ingunda, is actually imprisoned in a space the size of an upright coffin, and fed through a slit in the wall that permits only cracks of light to enter. She is the natural daughter of the Abbess Agnes and Fortunatus, the poet who is later to become a priest. Raised by peasants, who are later slaughtered by plundering armies, her incarceration is penance for the guilt of her birth and her desertion of her stepparents into the safety of foundress Radegunda's convent.

Radegunda is the keystone in this pregothic tale. A Christian princess of Thuringia, for years she has been the unwilling (yet sometimes willing) wife of the Frankish King Clotair who captured her and holds her in connubial thrall. Her rebellion is against all sensuality, but her instincts betray her into enjoying Clotair's violent lovemaking. Still, full of religious recognitions, she tells him, "life is a place of exile," and he responds with pagan insistence: "Life is life and to deny it [is] the refuge of slaves and frightened women."

After sexual intercourse with Clotair Radegunda rolls naked in the snow to punish her hot flesh, scourges herself ("more like a nun than a Queen," her husband says), and gives her protective, maternal love to Agnes, a young child of the court whose innocence she tries to protect. "Sully her flesh? Make her into a—a female?" she asks her brother Chlodecharius. And before he can have Agnes, he is killed by Clotair. Radegunda demands her freedom from her murderous husband and a convent in which to live out the rest of her life.

Radegunda comforts Agnes on Chlodecharius' death: "He is with God. We must be concerned for ourselves. Death is the rule of this world." Into the convent, the only place of refuge in those days for endangered women, Agnes follows her Queen; many years later the poet Fortunatus seeks them out in order to compose lays about Radegunda's life. There he finds all the sins of the world enclosed: envy, ambition, lust. Radegunda, seeking even greater purity, becomes a recluse from her own sisters, cloistered deeply among the cloistered. So profound is her self-examination that she wonders if entering a convent, when one knows of what is happening in the world, is not "an act of selfishness, of self-love?" She becomes a saint, celebrated throughout the kingdom while she is still alive. The bishop bemoans her presence in his domain:

> *She sends—thanks to her money and connections—to Eastern Churches for her relics because she knows that here in the West we do not hack up saints' bodies to give out ears and fingers and less mentionable parts to passing pilgrims. She has collected the most imposing charnel heap in Gaul. Really, when one sees what the Germans make of Christianity, one wonders was it worth converting them. Each trophy has a story, of course. St. Mamas's finger flew off its metacarpus when her agent turned up in Jerusalem. Other relics transported themselves to her convent from a villa where she happened to have left them. God has obviously nothing better to do than to go round picking up after Radegunda!*

The story rounds itself off with fine, ironic strength, humorous (as much of the writing is) and inevitable: the foundress dies; Agnes, full of grief for her brutally killed, walled-in daughter, takes her place in the wall; upon the death of the old bishop, Fortunatus succeeds him.

This small, intimately related group of characters, united carnally or through renunciation and religious fervor, are surrounded by the great outer darkness of the sixth century: pillaging, looting, beatings, rape, murder and torture, conquest. Fury inhabits the religious life as well, so that the whole progress of the novel is through rivers of blood and high spirituality. God lives in and broods over the book. He and His people take on real presence because of the sustained medieval quality of the prose: no "puff-ball words" here (to use O'Faolain's words from "The Man in the Cellar"), nothing but firm, hard, Saxon verbiage. So we hear the aging Radegunda ask God for death "which You owe me":

> *I want to leave all this and follow you. You bade me have no care for the body and you know I have none—and yet you will not release me from it. I would joyfully release myself and join you. You have forbidden self-slaughter and I must abide by your will. I must live on in a failing body in a world of flesh which I understand less and less—for my spirit strains only towards you. You. It longs to burst its bonds. It yearns to shed this body which is like an old husk gone dry, foul, senseless and ill-fitting, so that the spirit itself can see less clearly and hear less sharply through eyes gone blear and ears desperate for the sound of one voice: yours. I am neither here nor there. I am hungry for your presence. I hanker for the great blaze of your glance which, when you turn it on me, will burn out the husk of my body and draw my soul to you. This is what I covet and crave, what I have been longing and living for since I was a girl.*

The force of language, the subtle and entirely successful re-creation by means of it of the spirit as well as the events of Gallic life 13 centuries ago, at the end of the Roman era and the beginning of the Christian, make *Women in the Wall* a remarkably modern historical novel, poignant and powerful. It absorbs the reader into a time when women were chattels, when "inherited land followed the spear not the spindle,"—into a time when the greatest conqueror was not of the flesh but of the spirit, when the full force of early Christianity made fanatics and saints of its believers.

Doris Grumbach

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The Mountain Lion
by Jean Stafford

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux, reprinted 1972; $6.95)

Jean Stafford's novel *The Mountain Lion* (1947) tells of two children, brother and sister, growing up in America at a time more remote from us than the calendar conveys—an irrecoverable time, before World War II, when America still cherished innocence. As the novel opens Ralph is 10 and Molly eight. They are too young yet to have had the experience that dispels innocence. But in the four years their story spans, they are forced into growing up, a dangerous process, possibly deadly. For they must enter "a tunnel with no end," the dark tunnel of adolescence in which the child will be forever lost. In the shadows of this tunnel, where shamefully Ralph and Molly discover sin, their childhood expires—and with it, the dream of American possibilities that once we shared.

That was the dream of expansion, of growth and release, for which our symbol was the West. When early in the novel Ralph cries, "Golly *Moses*, I'd like to go out West," he fuses with a traditional figure of American history and literature—the roving young hero who leaves civilization behind, longing to escape its corruption, and sets out to find freedom in the territory ahead—Huck Finn's illusory place: the still untouched, uncontaminated, open spaces of the West. Summoned by their grandfather, a "half legendary" annual visitor from Colorado, a "sort of god of September"—who also resembles an Indian and a "massive, slow-footed bear"—the children go West. They come upon the landscape of fable: of mountains, forests, glaciers, streams and pastures; of animals—coyotes, elk, deer, bighorn, beavers, cattle and horses; of rangy men and hunting rituals; of untold riches—an American landscape bathed in golden light. Here released from their mother's "sissy life," the children feel free to grow. Molly finds "an ideal glade" in the mountains where she writes poems and stories, collects ladybugs, and stalks wild animals with her Brownie. Ralph rides and hunts and becomes obsessed with a golden mountain lion, the last of its kind, which he alone must kill. One day he finds his lion, and for a precious fleeting moment, dream and reality coalesce. He shoots—and kills his sister Molly; and the burst of blood upon her forehead becomes the mark of inbred inescapable guilt in the American character. The letting of blood, with which the novel begins and ends, betrays the dream of innocence.

Why must Molly die? Why must brother and sister—so close they think and act and even bleed as one—fall into antagonistic roles that seem inevitable; and mutually destructive? Why must the male become a hunter, and the female, his prey? These questions strike me as crucial and implicatory—and too long overlooked. Raised here they can lead us to the reconsideration of a prophetic American novel we have in the past unjustly neglected; and to the reconsideration of an anachronistic American myth we may in the future finally disown.

Molly dies, I believe, in a sacrificial ceremony disguised in the novel as accident. Her death is demanded by the great masculine myth of the West—a symbolic place: where boys like Ralph become men; and girls like Molly become not only extraneous and intrusive, but actively threatening to the ritual of male initiation. For just as the West held the promise of innocence, so also it promised manhood. It defined the terms for manhood by its ritual, which, in the American novel, might be modified in its details, but never in its exclusion of women. The young hero going West was to leave all women behind. In the wilderness he was to join a male tribe of archetypal hunters. They were to designate a sacred spot of wilderness and a legendary animal, usually personified, as the place and object of the hunt. When the boy and animal met, in a mystically charged encounter, he achieved courage, skill and pride—and became a man. The greatest story in American fiction that enacts this myth—and its impossible strain in merging manhood and innocence—is William Faulkner's "The Bear." Ike McCaslin, the boy who hunts Old Ben in the wilderness of the South, casts his indelible shadow over Ralph, hunting "Goldilocks" the lion in the Colorado mountains (and more recently, over D. J. hunting Grizzer, old "Mr. Bear," in Norman Mailer's *Why Are We in Vietnam?*). Like Ike, Ralph has committed himself to a timeless ritual of initiation, and implicitly to the decision to break with Molly. For as a female she encumbers him in his obsessive stalking of the mountain lion, and of the masculinity that is for him the real trophy of the hunt. Her constant presence reminds him of a part of himself he can no longer endure as he grows up, and indeed must kill: the feminine part of his nature.

Thus *The Mountain Lion* is a study in childhood ambivalence, in social intolerance. For American society does not tolerate ambivalent or shared sexual roles: it demands that the child growing up assume a clear-cut sexual identity. This demand destroys both Ralph and Molly as it turns them against each other, and involutes their love with hate. It destroys them because they are too much a part of each other to conform to the unequivocal roles of man and woman their society prescribes. Those who do conform—their twinkly older sisters, their Uncle Claude, their companion Winifred, tomboy turned coquette—are inane. As social satire *The Mountain Lion* is merciless and funny. Jean Stafford surveys the American scene, East and West, and finds everywhere that American characters are reduced to caricature. She presents familiar stereotypes—the fluttery, supercilious suburban mother; the tea-drinking, discreetly belching, chinless, platitudinous pastor; the red-necked, "gosh darn," weekend whooping cowhands; the wizened old wizardly black family cook; the grinning Oriental; the menacing Mexican gardener, a "bad man" singing "bad songs" in Spanish; the eccentric old-maid postmistress eating health foods and peering (hopefully?) under the bed. Tintypes all: flattened, glossy, gross figures. But they represent the adult world in which eventually the children must find their grown-up roles. As a comedy of manners *The Mountain Lion* is caustically funny. But as a social condemnation it is not funny at all. All our prejudices are here imprinted, both consciously and not. We must find the novel far more condemning than intended: for time, the sweeping course of events in recent American history, has reinforced the horror with which it ends. Time has shown that violence and the waste of

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young life are no accident. Ralph's dilemma is emblematic. If he is to grow up as a man acceptable to a society that polarizes men and women—if he is to resolve the deep-rooted and potentially life-enriching ambivalence within his nature—he must get rid of his sister.

Why must Molly die? So that Ralph can live up to a male image perpetuated by the myth of the West that makes violence and destruction the consummation of manhood. "Learning the ways of a man" out West, proving "his worth or manliness," Ralph inherits the legacy of confused moral values the ritual of initiation transmits. Killing, he learns, is an art. Through killing, as through art, one enters a timeless world of ritual and tradition, and one arrests time. So killing becomes also an act of love. For as one stops time he stops change: which means that whatever one loves remains fixed in form, within grasp, never to be lost in time but held forever in love. If this is the logic of madness, it nevertheless informs romantic literature, and Ralph becomes a romantic hero when he determines to kill the mountain lion, an animal whose beauty arouses his erotic fantasy, because he loves her: "Goldilocks . . . would be killed . . . out of his own love for her golden hide." Once she is dead he can possess her forever: "have her stuffed and keep her . . . all his life." With Molly also, killing becomes a confused expression of Ralph's love. He loves her for her "innocence," in which he seeks his own salvation: "Molly alone . . . did not urge him to corruption." But he finds innocence imperiled by time and change, which have already left him tainted. He wants her pure and inviolate, but if she grows up the knowledge of sex will be her sin. For in the minds of the children, molded by their fastidious mother—their father conveniently dead—sex and sin are synonymous. American puritanism asserts itself through Ralph's self-accusations of guilt over his sexual fantasies. The children's struggles to repudiate sex strike us now as old-fashioned and comic, but they turn out destructive. Their naive and strict attitude seems reinforced by Jean Stafford's rhetoric, which calls sex "sin," especially sex in women. Violence in men, however, is an earned virtue. As Ralph thrashes about trying to find both manhood and salvation—perennial priorities of the male hero in American fiction—he dooms his sister. Wedged between the cult of violence and the cult of virginity, Molly is crushed to death.

But Molly also collaborates in her death. A fascinating aspect of the novel,

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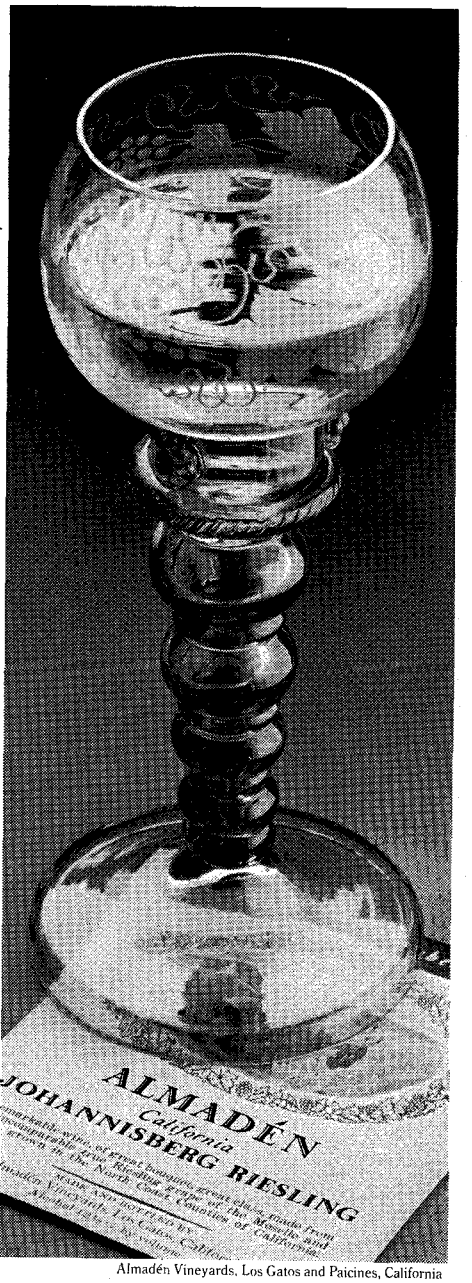

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I believe, is her willingness to accept death as an only alternative, and to elicit Ralph's unconscious support of her desire. In his profound sympathy with his sister, Ralph intuits her suicidal impulse. Much as he loves and needs her, he shares her wish; and when his initiation rite demands violence, he can with impunity comply with this wish because killing has become a sanctified act. Through ritualistic murder, he tries to save his sister, and, at the same time, by making her a scapegoat, to save himself. So both children are sacrificed, and the myth of the West—which separates men from boys, and boys from women—ultimately sustained. Seeing Ralph step into this myth and rigidly enact its ritual, we can no longer believe he kills Molly by chance: or without cultural sanction. We have become too sophisticated in our reading of the unconscious intentions of an individual, and of a society, to think that accident, even one so obviously contingent as Ralph's, strikes gratuitously, without motive or purpose—a freak occurrence. Within the novel Molly is portrayed as a freak, and chosen for her destiny.

Why does Molly *want* to die? She knows why, and says so. "I know I'm ugly. I know everyone hates me. I wish I were dead." We need not elaborate here on the price any American woman must pay for being ugly—for being *defined* as ugly, that is, by her culture. At the end of Katherine Anne Porter's famous novella "Old Mortality," an elderly maiden aunt reveals to the young heroine the persecution she has suffered because of her protruding teeth and receding chin: "All my life the whole family bedeviled me about my chin. My entire girlhood was spoiled by it. Can you imagine . . . people who call themselves civilized spoiling life for a young girl because she had one unlucky feature?" All of Molly's features are unlucky: height, "heavy eyebrows," dark skin, "prominent nose," lank black hair, weak eyes. In Ralph, her double, these features turn to advantage as he grows tall, dark and handsome, and, by a miracle reserved only for him, no longer needs eyeglasses. Molly's pretty older sisters, smugly on their way to marriage, serve as foil and reprimand to the quirky, awkward, critical, contentious little girl who strikes everyone as a "discord," being opposed to all "in temperament, in capacity, in propensities." These last are not Jean Stafford's words but Charlotte Brontë's describing Jane Eyre, another child misfit. Jane Eyre develops inner strength by becoming contemptuous of all those she could "never please" because she was not by nature a "sanguine, careless, exacting, handsome, romping child." Molly loses strength when she displaces her powerful and righteous feelings of contempt from others to herself. Her fatality lies in accepting the mean and ugly image that an unsympathetic world reflects to the child who is different. Hating herself, for the same reason others hate her—because she seems a freak—she wants to die. Though precocious, ambitious—she had wanted to be a writer—acutely critical and discerning, her talents go to waste. Her intelligence is labeled a "handicap." Only conventional beauty and simpering ways can save her, she thinks: "If only she had yellow hair, she thought, she would be an entirely different kind of person." But the image in the mirror does not reflect Shirley Temple. She hates the image so much that shortly before she dies she adds her own name to her diary's "list of unforgivables." Then she breaks down and cries: "and all the time she cried she watched herself in the mirror, getting uglier and uglier until she looked like an Airedale." In death she looks like "a monkey." Her limp body evokes the final pitiless judgment with which the book ends, the words of Magdalene, the tough old black cook whom Molly in her fantasies makes her mother: "Lord Jesus. The pore little old piece of white trash."

So the indictment of Molly is complete. It is, I believe, the novel's brilliant *tour de force* and leads to its inevitable climax. In her stories Jean Stafford shows the same brilliance when describing characters driven like Molly to internalize the social values they believe they have either rejected or transcended. Her prize story "In the Zoo" depicts two sisters recalling their childhood, not realizing, as we do with a shock, that they have grown up to be the kinds of women they despised. In "The End of a Career" a woman blessed with rare and exquisite beauty discovers she has been cursed. Because everyone valued her beauty she devoted her life to its care, only to discover at the end of her "career" that she had sacrificed her life to society's love of appearance. The young woman of "The Echo and the Nemesis" finds beauty and intellectual brilliance burdens too heavy for her to carry. So she splits her personality in two, bestowing beauty on one self, and brains on the other: a solution of insanity, painful and full of self-punishment of an almost diabolical kind. She eats herself into obesity—a fate worse than death for the American woman. In *The Mountain Lion* Ralph fears Molly is going "crazy." We certainly would declare her phobic about snakes and sex, and generally neurotic. We might declare her *driven* crazy; and find some of her neurotic ploys transparent and childishly endearing; funny; pesty and profoundly sad. Had she lived the sequel to her story might have been Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar*. But the point is she could not live. Given the rigidity of roles within her society, and her inability to play them, she could not grow up. She could only become more isolated, more unhappy, more eccentric. She tried. Even at the last, grown tall, her newest misfortune, she was still trying to cope by stooping and sidling through the schoolhalls like a crab.

Jean Stafford is a distinguished writer, winner of the Pulitzer prize in 1970. In 1947, when *The Mountain Lion* was published, critics praised it as a "beautifully modeled tale." Reconsidering it today, we may not be as impressed as the original readers by the perfection of its structure, too closed for our modern taste; or the polish of its wit and language, too stiff and glossy; or the manipulation of its Freudian symbols, too contrived. We may not be so unprepared for, nor so delighted with, its eruption of "sudden horror" at the end. We have seen the world erupt with so much horror that we hardly expect happy endings; we are more alert to

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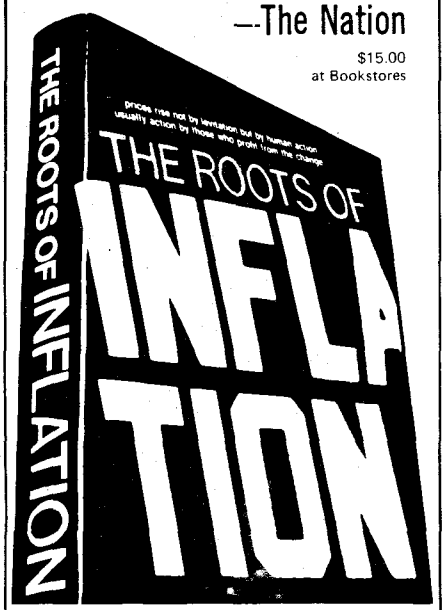
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symptoms of disorder. The symptoms are there on the first page when blood erupts from the children: simultaneous nosebleeds, the aftermath of a poisoning of their system not entirely cured, and probably not entirely curable. Their grandfather's blood—the grandfather from the East—also had been poisoned, and he died. Was something invidious being transmitted through the bloodstream of this typical American family, some poison flowing from one generation to the next, contaminating the children? In 1947 the reviewers did not see this strain in the novel: that it embodied a puritanical, even Calvinistic, view of life beneath its witty satire; that from the beginning, it had the children predestined to violence and horror. Every force in the novel pushed them toward this, and because they were good children and not rebellious, they did not resist. Ralph allowed himself to be alienated from his sister so that he could become a man without any "sissified" traits; a good boy, he was shocked by his incestuous fantasies, and bewildered by sex. To preserve his innocence he displaced his emotions by falling in love with a mountain lion to which he gave the endearing and childish name Goldilocks. Molly allowed herself to become alienated from herself and grew to hate herself when she should have hated the world that was driving her crazy. It would be nice to think that if the children were growing up today, they would survive, perhaps even prevail. For while the intervening years have brought horror, they have also brought social changes that give children, boys and girls, more choices and more latitude in growing up. If *The Mountain Lion* makes us reconsider some of the ways children have been forced to grow up in America, then it should not remain out of print and neglected. In 1947 one reviewer hoped it would become "a modern classic." Apparently it has not. But if by classic we mean basic, typical and enduring, then upon reconsideration, perhaps that is what it is. For it embodies our basic prejudices and enduring myths, and it represents our typical consciousness as Americans. If by classic we mean high quality, *The Mountain Lion* fits that definition too.

Blanche H. Gelfant

Blanche H. Gelfant is author of *The American City Novel* (Univ. of Oklahoma Press) and teaches at Dartmouth College.

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Over and Out

Resignation in Protest
by Edward Weisband and Thomas M. Franck

(Grossman; $10)

A modest proposal: this important book should be issued to every policy-level government official with the requirement that it be read carefully upon receipt and at least once a year thereafter. Perhaps, for good measure, there should be appended a reprint of "Getting Out and Speaking Out," a painful article by former National Security Council staffer James C. Thomson, Jr. in the Winter 1973-74 issue of *Foreign Policy*.

But such invitations to heresy would never be issued in the first place and rarely accepted even if they were, for the American tradition, as the authors sadly document, is not one of public resignation in protest. Loyalty to the President, loyalty to the club, transcends loyalty to nation and conscience. Thus despite the intensely moral character of the national debate about Vietnam, there was no top-level resignation in public protest. One can scarcely quarrel with the authors' tart observation about all those cocktail party doves: "If all the top State, White House and Pentagon officials whose recently published memoirs place them squarely in the camp of the doves had indeed been doves, Presidents Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon must have conceived, organized, administered and almost fought the war alone." A number of these "doves" will be embarrassed to find their names in this book, but embarrassment is about the harshest penalty most of them suffered. Most of them have gone on to fancy jobs and bigger salaries, while the kids who opposed the war suffer one kind of punishment or another and the kids who went were killed by the tens of thousands.

The horrors of Vietnam and Watergate might never have happened or would have been greatly mitigated if insiders of conscience had resigned in public protest. The list of those who had serious reservations about Vietnam or let it be understood that they did, the McNamaras, the Balls, the Stevensons, is long, but not one of them did anything effective. When a group of intellectuals approached Stevenson—who is not discussed in the book—in June 1965 and asked him to resign in protest against American policy in the Dominican Republic and Vietnam, he immediately rejected the proposal. "That's not the way the game is played."

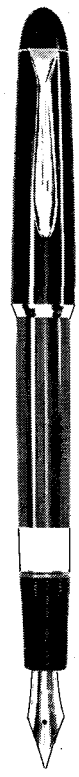
How the game *is* played in America, and why, is the substance of this essential book. Weisband, a political scientist, and Franck, an international lawyer, examine American history and find only a few instances where leading government figures have quit in public protest. And with few exceptions—the resignations of Elliot Richardson and William Ruckelshaus took place in totally unique circumstances—those who did committed political suicide. American politicians never tire of proclaiming the necessity of dissent and of contrasting our system of free dissent with that of the Soviet Union, but the fact is, as the authors demonstrate, that "the public-protest resigner tends to become the object of a generally successful effort—on the part of the Presidency, its agencies, and allies—to destroy his reputation and credibility." One has only to recall how Henry Wallace was treated by the Truman administration and its allies in the press and the liberal community. (Wallace, of course, did not quit in protest but took public positions that forced Truman to fire him, which amounts to the same thing.)

This, as the authors show, is in melancholy contrast to the British tradition where ministers often quit in angry protest, even during war, only to return to power, even as Prime Minister, in the future. There it is considered a measure of stature and a badge of honor to resign with a fiery speech in Parliament. Tradition even designates a particular spot in Commons where such speeches are made.

But here, when a senior official resigns, even because of a deep difference in policy, there is usually a polite, even cordial exchange of letters, after which everyone concerned denies that any policy difference was involved. The authors discuss how and why this tradition developed. They also discuss—and this discussion is as important as it is interesting—the serious dangers that this timid tradition has given rise to. The first is obvious. The nation can pursue unwise, even disastrous policies if serious differences among senior officials are put aside in the name of team play. Not quite so obvious—and here the authors are superb—is that lack of effective dissent at the center makes more intense the dissent at the perimeters. American society is dangerously polarized, as in the case of Vietnam, when there is no one at the center of government around whom dissent can focus. It became the ins against the outs to the extent, in the Vietnam debate, that the basic institutions of American government were questioned, and with cause. Successive administrations were horrified and outraged that the Movement was working outside the system; what they could or would not recognize was that they, not the dissenters, were responsible.

Another thing. This monolithic rejection of dissent makes a Daniel Ellsberg inevitable. If a responsible insider quits in public protest, he can provide the information necessary upon which to base his dissent. Or if he is convinced for reasons of national security that it is unwise to make it public, it is reasonably assumed that he knows what he is talking about. But when vital information is withheld from the public, someone is going to try to provide it. Hence Ellsberg and the Pentagon papers.

I have only begun to hint at the scope and sophistication of this slender but significant book. There is one weakness, hardly the authors' fault: they are unable to provide an immediate alternative to this dangerous tradition that puts team play above conscience and national welfare. Changing a long tradition is difficult; so is amending the Constitution in the direction of the British



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system that institutionalizes checks and balances within the Executive. But our system did fail terribly and once the shock, and the lessons, of Vietnam and Watergate have worn off, it could happen again. Since the Constitution, amended or not, is no protection if we allow those in power to circumvent it, the only protection is an electorate that demands a higher standard of political conduct. If we start insisting that the candidates for next year meet the kind of standards Weisband and Franck suggest, we'll get a better President than we've had for a long time.

Richard J. Walton

Richard J. Walton is author of *The Remnants of Power* (Coward, McCann & Geoghegan) and *Cold War and Counterrevolution* (Viking).

Marjorie Perloff on television

Soap Bubbles

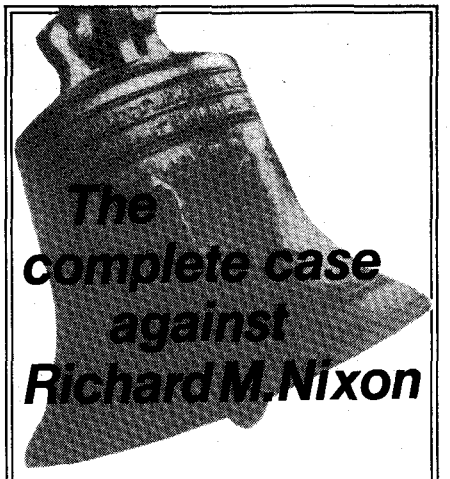
For the past few months, thanks to a sabbatical, during which I am writing a scholarly book, I have spent some gripping hours watching two daytime serials: "Somerset" (NBC, 9 am EDT) and "The Young and the Restless" (CBS, 12 pm EDT). The more I watch the more I am convinced that if you want to know how America is responding to "The New Feminism" or "The Permissive Society," tune in, not to serious "cinema verité" efforts like last year's much touted "An American Family," but to the soap operas. Here, between the shampoo ads and the quizzes about the scouring strength of rival cleansers, is the ultimate world of women's fantasy.

Everyone knows, of course, that daytime serials deal with such topics as family quarrels (the generation gap!), divorce, adultery, nervous breakdowns, alcoholism, attempted murder, rape, incurable cancers, brain tumors, and, these days, even incest and abortion. Only homosexual love affairs remain, at least for the time being, taboo. But the daytime serial reverses the theme introduced by the famed opening sentence of *Anna Karenina*: "Happy families are all alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." On the Soaps, *every* family is unhappy, and each is unhappy in more or less the same way. Since neither plot nor characterization are of the essence here, we must look for other structural features that have made the soap operas such a popular and durable fictional genre.

First, the appeal of the daytime serial is that it *is* a serial. Watch "Somerset" once and you'll be bored; but after a few weeks of viewing time, Ellen Grant and Brad Elliot seem like old acquaintances, rather like neighbors or colleagues whom one sees every day, and whose lives one wonders about in passing. Accordingly, the Golden Rule of soap opera is that the actors must remain the *same;* should they go on vacation, the plot must eliminate them for a few weeks because it is imperative that the faces of these faceless people be reassuringly familiar. Continuity—the rhythm of recurrence—is so essential that on Fridays, when that rhythm is about to be interrupted by the weekend break, there must be a crescendo, an especially climactic episode. That way our attention is held over until Monday. And Mondays are usually low-pressure days when minor characters have their squabbles or Friday's events are rehashed.

Certain formulae are observed in all soap operas:

1) The scene is always a small town named Genoa City or Somerset or Henderson—a nice, neighborly, suburban idyllic town that is near (but not too near!) a Big City, usually Chicago, that heartbeat of the nation, or perhaps Detroit. Occasionally new characters (neurosurgeons overcome by remorse because they have accidentally killed their sweethearts on the operating table, amnesiac psychiatrists or runaway fathers) come to our small town from the Big City, and occasionally women, contemplating an affair with The Man from the Past, go there and are seen in some sort of Palm Court restaurant nibbling escargots and sipping martinis with the Other Man against a background of gypsy music and soft lights. Eastern cities like New York and Boston are looked upon with a mixture of distrust and awe: when the Mercers move from Boston to Somerset, everyone assumes that they must be snobs; on the other hand, when Stan Kurtz, chief of staff at Somerset Hospi-



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Peter W. Rodino, Jr., Chairman

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tal, learns of Jerry Kane's secret past (he was a "brilliant" open-heart surgeon at "Manhattan general"), Stan wants to hire Jerry on the spot.

The beautiful irony is that although the City, with its poverty, pollution and crime, is far away, all the young men in "Somerset" and "The Young and the Restless" look like up-and-coming Madison Avenue execs, while all the homey housewives or young working girls have been carefully dressed by Dior or Halston and coiffed by Elizabeth Arden. They sport the latest fashions (although nothing "way out" is permitted) and talk the New Small Talk: currently, "I can handle it, buddy," "Let it be," "No way!," "That blows my mind," "She's something else." Moreover, these idyllic little towns like Somerset miraculously have cocktail lounges and restaurants with names like The Hayloft or Pierre's, whose decor is transplanted straight from Manhattan's East 50s. The atmosphere is quiet and refined, the waiters have French accents, the dry martinis are very dry. How marvelous life in Anytown, USA can be!

2) All the characters have neutral WASP names like Eve Lawrence, Scott McKenzie, Jill Foster, Stuart Brooks or Greg Mercer. For a long time this naming process puzzled me. Why no Italians, Irish, Greek, Poles, Jews or blacks on daytime serials? But then I remembered that this is a fantasy world. The viewer must identify with the problems a given character faces, but never quite with the character. Besides, specificity leads to nasty implications. Suppose that the rich and alcoholic Mrs. Chancellor of "The Young and the Restless" were named Mrs. O'Reilly? This could be taken as a slur on the Irish. Or suppose the owner of Paisley's department store in Somerset, an elegant fellow with rather "loose" morals, were named not Ned Paisley but, say, Ned Pappadapoulos? Wouldn't the implication be that Greeks are rich *and* immoral to boot?

3) The professional status of soap opera people is particularly interesting. Roughly 80 percent of the men are doctors. The rest are newspaper editors, lawyers or proprietors of shops, restaurants and factories. The script writers believe that the female viewing audience is familiar with very few professions. Everyone has been to a doctor; we all read some newspaper, patronize stores and have a vague idea of what happens when a criminal is tried in court. Architects, engineers, physicists, stockbrokers—these figures are too remote, whereas auto mechanics, short-order cooks, bricklayers—such working-class types are, on the contrary, too familiar and "low." So the doctor, preferably a brain surgeon, psychiatrist or cardiologist, reigns supreme. This fantasy figure spends most of his time in the hospital coffee shop having intense conversations about romance (his or someone else's). Young, handsome, always being paged but never in a hurry, the soap opera doctor is indeed a dream figure. In between coffee breaks, he occasionally performs open-heart surgery in miraculously well-equipped operating rooms, even if, like "Somerset's" Jerry Kane, he hasn't been inside a hospital for months. TV physicians can treat anyone for anything. Someone's girlfriend goes into labor, a relative has a nervous breakdown, a friend takes an overdose—never mind what the problem is, Snapper Foster (an intern at Genoa City Hospital in "The Young and the Restless") is right on the spot, taking her pulse, examining her chart, or, if necessary, even operating on her! I use the female pronoun here advisedly: the patient is invariably a woman.

In the newspaper office, things are again reassuringly familiar. The only stories ever "covered" by the *Register* or Stuart Brooks' paper are stories that happen to the characters we know: Heather's wedding, the death-threat notes she receives, Leslie's concert tour and so on. Factory owners wear elegant suits and look appropriately worn out and preoccupied when they come home at night. Lawyers like Greg Foster invariably fall in love with female victims of injustice like the call girl Gwen, whom Greg rehabilitates (she has just entered the convent!) and *almost* marries—almost, because he can't quite bring himself to marry a girl with Gwen's "past."

The rare artists who appear on the soaps—like Maestro Fausch on "The Young and the Restless"—must have foreign accents and genteel manners. All musicians are, of course, from the Old World; they address the aspiring young concert pianist as "Lesslee, mein Liebchen. . . ." The art world is *gemütlich:* the maestro spends most of his time flying in from distant cities to persuade Leslie Brooks, who hasn't touched the piano in ages, to be the guest artist with "*the* orchestra."

4) From a sociological perspective, the women's professions are even more interesting because lately, soap opera

The Vietnam Summing Up

The New Republic of May 3, 1975, with its starkly evocative cover of Goya on "the disasters of war," brought together the reflections of the wisest critics of the Vietnam adventure.

Harold R. Isaacs, Kevin Buckley, Frances FitzGerald, Stanley Karnow, Richard Holbrooke, Chester L. Cooper, George McT. Kahin, Adam Yarmolinsky, Stanley Hoffman, Anthony Lewis, Hans Morgenthau, Ronald Steel, James Chace, Dong Duc Khoi, and **Gerald Hickey.**

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heroines often have jobs! What a change from the old radio days when Ma Perkins watched over her brood or Our Gal Sunday presided over Lord Henry Brinthrop's British manor-house. In "Somerset" we have a woman newspaper publisher (Kate Cannell), a fashion-layout artist (Eve Lawrence), a secretary (Jill Grant), a psychiatrist (Dr. Terry Martin, married to Dr. Stan Kurtz) and a nurse (Heather Lawrence, newly married to Dr. Jerry Kane). In "The Young and the Restless," Laurie Brooks is a sometime writer of racy novels and a centerfold girl, her sister Leslie an aspiring concert pianist and owner of a café; sister Chris is on the staff of Legal Aid and works with poor people, and the youngest, Peg, is a student at "*The* University."

It all sounds very liberated until we realize that all the women have jobs that entail no training and no work and whose real aim is to meet *handsome, eligible men*. Thus Ellen Grant ("Somerset"), a housewife recently widowed and attractively fortyish, who has presumably never worked a day in her life, suddenly decides to "get a job." We next see her at Somerset Hospital (where else?), helping a cute boy named Skipper McKenzie, who has congenital heart disease, "adjust" to the sad fact that he can't play ball. And guess what? Skipper, who is a perfect love and *adores* "Aunt Ellen," turns out to have a father named Scott, a handsome widower and sports coach at "*The* University." Next thing you know, Scott is picking up Ellen to take her to a cocktail party and it looks like quite a romance until Ellen's daughter Jill, also newly widowed, becomes Scott's secretary and, what with one thing and another (all those night basketball games they must both attend!), Scott and Jill fall in love. Ellen and Jill's warm mother-daughter relationship becomes strained and tense until Ellen persuades Jill that they both find Scott attractive simply because he reminds them of Dad. This supposition is entirely plausible since all the men in Somerset are more or less interchangeable. In any case, after this shock of recognition, both Ellen and Jill get over Scott.

5) A job is, then, both the way to get a man (why else would any woman want to *work?*) but also the way to lose him to another working woman. Soap opera heroines may have a confidante who is no competition (Ellen Grant serves this role for Eve Lawrence), but generally speaking, women don't trust one another; they are catty, bitchy and suspicious. Men, on the other hand, are jolly, friendly, slap each other on the back, and perform helpful services, but they are susceptible to any attractive woman who comes along. Thus women must be eternally vigilant, smartly dressed, beautiful and thin. Pregnancy is a problem: husbands like Julian Cannell are proud of being fathers-to-be, but while Kate gets a tummy, the beautiful and seductive Eve is right in there, waiting to lure Julian away. And so Kate wonders if she really wants to have a baby. When Tom Conway, her business colleague and ex-lover, warns her that having a baby will mean giving up her job, he says: "Oh Kate, you'll miss working. Those long lunches, those intimate cocktail hours. . . ."

That is what *working* means in the fantasy world of the Soaps. When cub reporter Carrie Wheeler, a bright young thing from "*The* College" joins the *Register*, she gets the evil eye from Greg Mercer who works at the next typewriter. Carrie pretends she loathes Greg but we know better. One day, Carrie breaks down and weeps. Greg, who has been impervious to Carrie's journalistic skills, is charmed by her feminine weakness and, before you know it, he's invited her to The Hayloft for drinks. It's a lovely world after all.

6) In recent daytime serials, premarital or extramarital sex is permitted but only when the woman is, in fact, looking for a Permanent Relationship. Thus Heather lives "up at Jerry's place" during their courtship, but of course she knows all along that when Jerry's secret identity is finally revealed, she'll become "Mrs. Jerry Kane." Her widowed mother Eve is more sophisticated; she has a "relationship" with Ned Paisley and he's getting close to proposing, but Eve really wants to get Julian away from Kate and marry him so she plays it cool. *Marriage* is always the object.

Unless, of course, a woman is *already* married. Then there are other problems. In "The Young and the Restless," Jen Brooks has been a wonderful mother to her four daughters and a perfect wife to Stuart (who "lives for the newspaper"), but now that the girls are grown up and "on their own," she is restless. We see her putting away the Christmas ornaments and wondering what to do with her life now. Stuart and the girls suggest a vacation. Someone even suggests a volunteer job. But Jen knows what she wants. It's Bruce Henderson, Stuart's best friend, a cardiologist (based in Chicago, of course!), whom Jen loved some 30 years ago before she married Stuart. And so Jen and Bruce get together for an idyllic weekend in Key Biscayne. They dance on a moonlit terrace and he whispers in her ear: "Jen, we've brought up our families. Now we owe it to ourselves to live a little." Jen smiles in wan but happy acquiescence. Bruce adds in what is one of my favorite TV lines: "I could practice cardiology in Key Biscayne." Jen smiles again and they kiss. But then, back home in Genoa City, poor old Stuart, who has been realizing that he has "neglected Jen for the paper," has a heart attack. It's just a lucky break that his son-in-law Brad Elliot, who works for him, is really an ex-neurosurgeon in disguise because of course Brad saves his life. And now Jen must decide between duty and love. Stuart, who has *no idea* she had planned to divorce him and marry Bruce, asks to have his best friend at his bedside.

What will Jen do? What shall we ever do? At this writing I don't yet know the outcome. But the fantasy remains intact. It all boils down to a simple principle: a woman's role in life is to attract *her man* and *get him*. But the obstacles in her path are formidable, for who can control disease, sudden death or just plain circumstance? And these conflicts continue to disarm us because,

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in contrast to the Loud story, everything "real" is kept at bay. Telephones never ring unless a lover or confidante is calling; milkmen, laundrymen and exterminators never intrude into the immaculate living rooms of the Brookses or Grants or Chancellors—living rooms that consist of nothing but stuffed sofas and lamp tables. There are never any bills to pay or groceries to be bought; money, for that matter, is virtually an unmentionable although some characters are "rich" like the Chancellors and others "poor" like the fatherless Fosters. In Somerset and Genoa City, no one ever has to go to the cleaners or have their car inspected or take out the trash. There is only one fact of life—*romance*—eternally exciting and eternally thwarted. After 25 minutes of watching "Somerset," I return to my scholarly work thoroughly refreshed. My mind feels like a clean slate. And I can hardly wait until tomorrow to find out whether Jen Brooks will tell Stuart about her affair with Bruce Henderson. Handsome, devoted Bruce, that Chicago cosmopolite who can "always practice cardiology in Key Biscayne."

Marjorie Perloff, professor of English at the University of Maryland, is married to, yes, a cardiologist who practices in Philadelphia.

Daniel Robbins on art

Biennials

Early in February the Whitney Museum in New York opened its 1975 Biennial Exhibition, another attempt to exhibit the current condition of American art. Late in the same month, Washington's Corcoran Gallery of Art unveiled its 34th Biennial. The two exhibitions produced totally different effects: the Whitney show was boring; the Corcoran's exhilarating. The reason is deceptively simple: the quality of the works. Curiously this difference is not necessarily caused by opposing concepts of quality but by the organizing principles employed by each museum, factors extraneous to the art itself. These reflect a variety of issues: purpose, location, knowledge, financing, group cooperation. Some are theoretical, others highly practical, but all intrude on the work of art and its effect. The Whitney show contained the work of almost 150 little known and, for the most part, young artists. The Corcoran concentrated on 50, among whom are some of the most famous and distinguished painters working today. The work of only one artist appears in both biennials.

These survey biennials are in the tradition of the salons of the past whose purpose was to exhibit the best of what is happening in art and to permit the public to compare current work with that of the recent past, especially to compare the work of ambitious newcomers with the accomplishments of well established artists. This opportunity is intentionally absent from the Whitney biennial, an omission that makes the Whitney effort as daring as it was dreary. Five Whitney curators were sent to scour the country for new talent. Perhaps they assumed that their public was so knowing and sophisticated that it would forgive the exclusion of well known painters and sculptors. Perhaps motivated by the best democratic instincts of America (and supported by the National Endowment) and responding to years of peppery criticism from enthusiasts of regionalism such as Katherine Kuh, they rejected the standard of prior acknowledgement as a context for judging the unknown.

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The idea of an established or official taste is as repugnant to museum officials as it is—or was—to artists. In fact, in headlong retreat from officialdom, from elitism, many museum workers are trying to be receptive to the new, in an even, democratic way. On the other hand it is equally possible that the Whitney curators, who had the distinction of giving many of the Corcoran exhibitors their earliest attention five or six years ago, wished to be the avant-garde definers of quality, that is, so certain of a rigid definition of quality that their standards need not be explained by context. However, the very size of the Whitney's effort, as well as the fact that those selecting the show were several individuals rather than one, precludes even an implicit definition of quality. For the biennial is an experiment that failed.

Both tendencies, the shirking of the traditional curatorial responsibility to discriminate in a misguided effort to be fair, and the desire to discover a string of avant-garde painters (each curator's choice) have been developing for the last half-dozen years, straining the capacity of our institutions of contemporary art to cope with problems that seem mutually exclusive, driving sharp critics like Hilton Kramer into cranky positions. By avoiding their role as officials, the curators have increasingly made policemen out of critics who, in turn, resent being the establishment as much as museum workers do.

Who is willing to become the establishment? The startling possibility is that it may be the artist, called out of his studio because the collapse of international formal values has paralyzed functionaries from accepting their traditional roles. The Corcoran's version of current American art (also supported by the National Endowment) is the opposite of the Whitney's. Selected by Roy Slade, a Welsh artist who headed the museum's school of art before he became director, the show is as safe and conservative in organizing principles as the Whitney's is bold. Despite the precedents of Bryson Burroughs and Roger Fry, it has not been usual for museum directors or curators to emerge from the ranks of artists to representation (along with members of the public and other deprived minorities) on museum boards. In the rapid, agonizing turnover of officials at the Corcoran during the past eight years, two perennially anti-establishment and exceptional men briefly ran the Corcoran, Walter Hopps and James Harithas, both unusually sensitive to new art. Now art teacher Slade, with the help of his immediate predecessor Gene Baro, has organized a show containing so much beautiful painting that the leveling Whitney effort takes on the comparative appearance of a comprehensive roundup of postgraduate, young faculty work.

In this tough, repetitious, unintellectual preface to the Corcoran catalogue, Slade states his desire to make this biennial a celebration of good painting. Each artist is represented by one major work, usually very big. The arrangement, as at the Whitney, virtually consuming the whole museum, is on the whole satisfactory, enabling one to confront and judge each entry on its own terms. Although almost all the work is recent, most of the major directions and concerns of the last 20 years in American painting are represented. This cannot be said of sculpture, for only one piece is included.

Sol LeWitt's drawing, *All Double Combinations . . .*, 1972, finds superb realization on a scale seldom possible in public presentation of his work. Similarly Richard Lindner's exceptional oil, although comparatively small, is of a size most appropriate to the nature and intensity of his expression. Sam Gilliam needs, and has, an entire room for his magisterial *Three panels for Mr. Robeson*, breathtaking proof that folded, paint-soaked canvas can merge deeply lyrical expression with the heroism of important social comment. Gilliam's room, which must be seen to be understood, is a painting, a sculpture, an environment, as dramatic in its stark, uncompromising

Teaching Poetry at a Country School in Florida

It ain't there. Come off it, Rousseau.
The eyes roll inward, the brain coughs
like a motor at 10 below
and doesn't start: they're not bad kids.
Too dumb for poetry
and smart enough to know
they don't need it - no one needs it -
not their teachers, not their principal
nor coach who equates it with
queerness and public masturbation
which unfortunately it sometimes resembles,
particularly the iambic.

But we have to do it because
in the midst of that tangible boredom,
from that stack of pathetic papers
there is always one that you come across -
just before you turn to drink
with thoughts of murder or suicide -
there is always one who writes
My wings are invisible but brilliant;
they carry me to the dark forest
where the unicorns kneel in prayer . . . .

So you go on, after a while.
But still, all that effort, so little to show
like the royal palm outside my window
that goes up and up
and up, with a small green *poof* at the top.

Peter Meinke

Peter Meinke teaches at Eckerd College, St. Petersburg, Florida.

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use of purely visual means as in its urgent links to the human condition, the recent and distant past, embracing Calvary and the Martyrdom of St. Peter. Gilliam's work stands out as the single most moving piece in the biennial; and that it does so in a context of serious and acknowledged accomplishment (de Kooning, Brooks, Tworkov, Motherwell, grand old masters of the New York school all represented with works of consummate ability) is all the more impressive. It is a pleasure and a lesson to behold the skill of these men, to be reminded that their abilities remain undiminished, their individual styles rising to new heights. The violence of their earlier years has been replaced with a maturity, even suavity, of manner. If any young painter wishes to learn how to paint in shades of black, let him penetrate Motherwell's tour de force, *Plato's Cove*. If color and sensuality are to be enjoyed and studied, examine de Kooning's *Armchair*. If the disciplined example of driving energetic line against the translucent geometry of a dynamic grid wants observation, stand in front of the Tworkov.

As many of the features of '50s painting have been reinterpreted by young artists since 1969, so too has the distance narrowed between the generations of the New York School itself. Two painters who were dubbed "second generation" more than 20 years ago are stronger now than when they emerged. Joan Mitchell's *Chasse Interdite*, a joyous and loving commentary on nature, is also a complex, virtuoso example of the technique required to cope with immense size. Grace Hartigan, after many years of absence, has reappeared with *Another Birthday*, an exuberant reexploration of her earliest source affirming the continuous lessons she, alone among her contemporaries, absorbed from Matisse.

Warhol's 16-foot portrait of Chairman Mao is the perfect painting for the most noble space in the museum courtyard, demonstrating once again that artist's witty sense of the appropriate. No painting could be more apposite for this biennial, with the archeological treasures of the People's Republic scoring such a hit at the National Gallery (and the Chinese Communist delegation so actively sought for the chic scene). Warhol, too, has made his gesture toward the '50s, with two great brushy swatches of color running up the Chairman's imperial purple tunic—simultaneously a wry comment, genuine homage and pictorial necessity.

Of the other pop artists included by Slade, the giant free-standing Wesselmann *Still Life* is a disappointment, unless viewed like a set design as the effective background for Chairman Mao's imaginary view of the gallery visitors. The Indiana *Decade Autoportrait* is also less satisfying than its predecessors of 10 years ago, the changes it rings on Demuth's famous *Figure Five* losing out to undigested memories of Stuart Davis.

The historical antidotes to Pop—color field or post-painterly abstraction—are well represented by a group of wonderful and savvy paintings that trangress all the doctrines of color field, but are especially noteworthy because they *are* painterly. Guaranteed to evoke surprised comment is the heavily textured gray Olitski, with a whisper of graffiti present on its wall-like surface. Noland's *Afloat*, although five years old, is a marvel of blue, poising density of color against the size and direction of the canvas. Helen Frankenthaler's *Spring Bank* is as fresh as anything she has done in recent years. Albert Stadler, in two decorative panels, seems to be reinventing Odilon Redon, dangerously courting an imagery of birds, butterflies and falling leaves. Friedel Dzubas also skirts the banal with his light-filled sky picture, *Ikarus*, a program of undeniable drama realized without imagery. The frank admission that these works *do* relate to programs constitutes the principal departure from abstract orthodoxy; the artists seem relaxed, almost luxuriating in the certainty of their command over means.

Of the painters who were young or little known a half dozen years ago, Philip Wofford and Alan Shields must now feel especially complimented, if imitation is the highest form of flattery. Wofford's huge *Land's Reach*, a rich and passionate painting 20 feet across, is candid and open nature-painting—anything but a doctrine of pure form and color. The fabulous colors and sensual textures he develops, a torrent of directions that converge, struggle to evoke sensations of blinding, even sublime, natural experience. Alan Shields, one of the earliest painters to allow the canvas to hang free (successfully), to paint both sides like a crumpled sheet or banner, to fold material against the wall, aims at quieter feeling; but his example is no less evident among the younger Corcoran exhibitors, where the dominant impression is of artists who wish to increase, not reduce, their means of expression.

Among the realist painters, the marvelous Chuck Close portrait, *Richard*, is the only face in Washington

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that can compare to Warhol's *Mao*. Philip Pearlstein's nudes are executed with his usual impeccable skill, but reveal more overt wit than is customary in his usually dead-pan transcriptions of oddly truncated reality. The stillness of penetratingly observed models is relieved by a pattern of moving shadows on the floor. Of the sharp-focus realists, only a shoeshop by Paul Sarkisian is included, one suspects because of its sincere, if nostalgic and social overtones.

The Corcoran biennial contains painting by less than a dozen new artists. Slade must think these few are pretty good to hang with a group of veterans, and an additional platoon of about 25 artists who have already attracted followers, ready to insist that they stand with the best. According to the principle evident in the Whitney's organization, the Corcoran's usefulness must depend on those few artists making their debut. Without the new, Slade's show becomes merely an incomplete survey, a lopsided extravaganza in which one instantly would have to lament the absence of Johns, Kelly, Dine, Lichtenstein, and numerous major artists.

Among the new artists in the Corcoran biennial, the level of accomplishment is sufficiently high that the impression of a quality exhibition is not destroyed when these few works are encountered. In the translucent drawing of Steven Sorman, from Minnesota, Slade had found a sensitive and original talent. The work of Jennifer Bartlett, although relating to many currents (among them LeWitt, video art and animation) is arresting. William Conlon is exploring territory opened by Al Held; William Dutterer as well as Terrance La Noue are working competently, in the loose and occasionally hairy country discovered by Shields and Linda Benglis. Alan Cote is forcing something new from the austere example of Clyfford Still, and it will be interesting to see if it develops further. Marilyn Lenkowsky, for elusive reasons, is the only young artist to be represented in both the Whitney and Corcoran biennials. Her repetitive canvases, protruding like giant noses with color and taper, might look better in each others' company.

If the purpose of a biennial salon is to allow the public an opportunity to see the work of newer talent side by side with work of older and more experienced hands (as Hilton Kramer has suggested), the Corcoran show is a success limited by the fact that it is so safe and conservative, proving the talents of very few. The Whitney, throwing to the winds all notions of context proves nothing at all, unless it is that so vast an assemblage of new, young art is basically tedious. Could one combine the two shows, perhaps a score of Whitney artists would become established as serious talents from whom more might be expected.

The salon idea is an important one, but one that needs revitalization. It is the best means of allowing mass participation in a process of sustained artistic evaluation that otherwise becomes too hermetic, fragmented and, finally, uninteresting to matter to the educated public. The idea of the Whitney biennial needs to be combined with that of the Corcoran. Perhaps artists should once again, as with the great salons in France at the beginning of this century, assume control of this particular device of reaching their audience.

Kauffmann, *from page 20*

tion or biography. The interview with the designer seemed rather forced into the book since the woman has worked very little in films and her views on experimental theater are the commonplaces of theater journals; but all the others were interesting and many fascinating.

None more so than the talk with Akira Kurosawa whom Mellen considers "the sole living master of Japanese film." I was glad to see that opinion from someone whose experience of that country's film is wider than mine. A curious point: opinions of Kurosawa run through the book as a kind of touchstone for almost everyone interviewed. One director, Daisuke Ito, says, "I consider Kurosawa a finer artist than I." Others, particularly younger men, feel otherwise, strongly. In fact the very last word in the book is on this subject. Shuji Terayama, an avant-gardist, says: "At 24 I liked the work of Kurosawa very much. Now I don't hate it, but I felt pity when I saw *Dodes'ka-den*." (Kurosawa's latest picture. I was sad, too, probably for different reasons.)

Some noteworthy items. I think that Hiroshi Teshigahara understands less of what he accomplished in his beautiful *Woman in the Dunes* than some of his viewers do. (Not so extraordinary a situation with artists vis-a-vis critics.) The director Kenji Mizoguchi, an exquisite artist, worked so intensely that, according to an assistant, he wouldn't leave the set to go to the bathroom; he brought a bedpan with him. Kon Ichikawa, a superb director, admires Peter Fonda's *The Hired Hand*, a film I thought wretchedly neglected (*TNR*, Sept. 4, '71). And another director, Masahiro Shinoda, makes a statement that is arguable and worth arguing: "European films are based upon human psychology, American films upon action and the struggles of human beings, and Japanese films upon *circumstance*. Japanese films are interested in what surrounds the human being."

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ROCKEFELLER AND HIS ANTI-COMMUNIST FAKE LIBERAL AND REAL RIGHT WING AGENTS in the media (New York Times through National Review), government (Mansfield-Humphrey through Henry Jackson), the Unions (Woodcock through Meany), etc., many of whom are members of Rockefeller's Council on Foreign Relations, Commission on Critical Choices, Domestic Council, Tri-Lateral Commission, and CIA are plotting the Fascist looting of the human race through the genocidal slave labor strategy of Nazi Finance Minister Hjalmar Schacht. Read about the fight to stop their morally hideous and totally unnecessary imposition of international austerity, starvation, plague and war. *New Solidarity*, Marxist newspaper of the U.S. Labor Party. 20 issue introductory subscription $3.00 Box 1972, G.P.O. New York, New York 10001

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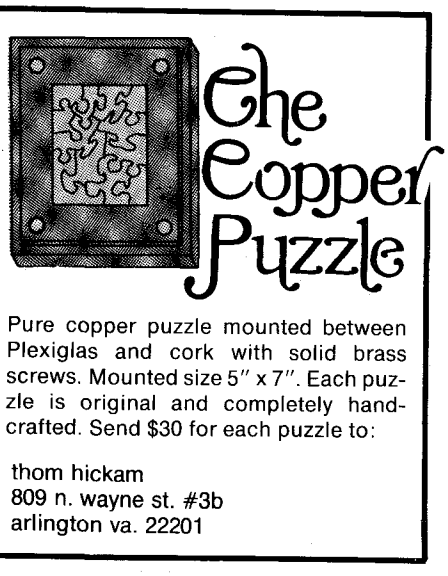
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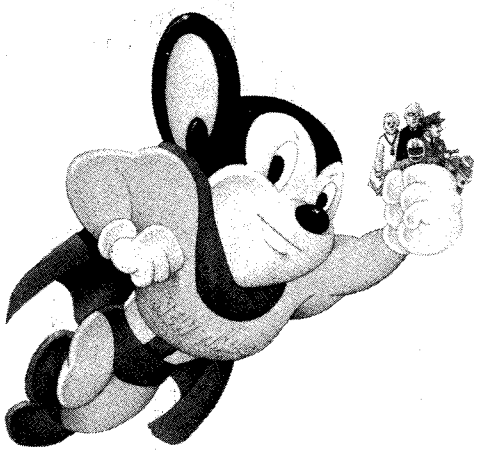


Superman we are not.

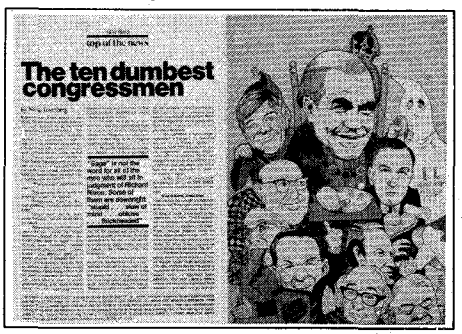
But that doesn't mean NEW TIMES isn't busting evil in the chops, fighting for the little guy, stripping the pants off phonies and generally shaking hell out of the establishment.

Like Mighty Mouse, we are small but powerful feisty. Out of all proportion to our size, we make waves. Strike fear in evil hearts. Give the tremble to fat cats. Shake the rafters. The Mouse that Roars, that's us.

Some recent roars.

Every two weeks, NEW TIMES comes along with a stick or two of dynamite in its fist.

There was our story on "The Ten Dumbest Congressmen," with our nomination for King of Dumb. How they screamed! There was "Pre-



scription Payola," about doctors who will risk your life for a color TV. There was "Southie is My Home Town," a look at the people of South Boston you didn't find in other media. (After a century of the shaft, maybe they had reasons for coming off as brawling racists.)

In "The Little Camera that Couldn't," NEW TIMES dissected Polaroid's SX-70, as a symbol of a consumer economy gone wild. In "A Wallace Is a Wallace Is a Wallace," we looked underneath the new moderate George and found—guess what—the same old George. In "Happy Days Are Here Again," we saw the new depression as upbeat—a chance for the whole Whole Earth thing. "The Gourmet Freeze-Out" ripped the foil off a big restaurant ripoff. "The Consulting Con Game" laid bare a cushy professorial racket. "They Shoot Ten-Year Olds, Don't They?" was a heartwarming look at New York's shootin' cops with their 007 license to kill. "That Championship Season" stripped the cover-up from the sex scandal that decimated Notre Dame's football team.

Is NEW TIMES mad all the time?

Golly, no. Don't get the idea we do nothing but dredge up embarrassing facts and tweak important noses. NEW TIMES. is *the magazine of what's happening* and that's a spectrum that includes love and music and lifestyles and movies and all manner of rare new ideas. For instance, we reported on Erhard Seminars Training (est), one of the most fascinating of the new life therapies. We got inside the world of bisexuality. We published our *own* medical research on pot—"Attention: Smoking Grass May Be Good for Your Health."

And of course we continue to report on the eternal battle of The Little Guys vs. The Big Guys. Like the story on Sam Lovejoy, who toppled the big bad nuclear tower. And the young hillbillies of Mendocino County who were

damned if they'd let their houses be torn down for lack of city plumbing.

Our bright, brash, talented writers and columnists—like Robert Sam Anson, Jesse Kornbluth, Marcia Seligson, Larry King, Amanda Spake, Jim Kunen, Mark Goodman, Frank Rich, Janet Maslin and Nina Totenberg—have one thing in common. They're unafraid. They'll plunge into anything, take chances and stands, crawl way out on limbs. Sure, NEW TIMES may fall on its face sometimes. But never on its knees!

We're plugged into *now*.

Whether you like it or not, you're living in a time of shattering transitions. Nobody knows where the world is heading and if they claim to, they lie!

NEW TIMES—more than any other magazine on the American scene, we think—is plugged into this difficult, exhilarating age. Do we understand what's going on? Do we know The Answers? Hell, we consider ourselves lucky when we know The Questions.

But we don't lie. We don't pretend impossible knowledge. Our minds and eyes are open and our promise to you is firm: we'll pin as much of the truth to the page as we know how.

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